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BEHIND THE LEGEND OF THE LOST BATTALION

BATTLE OF ANKARA TAMERLANE VS. THE THUNDERBOLT

LEE'S BLOODY BLUNDER AT MALVERN HILL

TRAGIC DAY FOR DANIEL BOONE AT THE BLUE LICKS

Interview
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Left: Newly promoted Lt. Col. John R. Sturges leads his 3rd Georgia Regiment through the Union line, only to die—with 25 of his men—when the 14th New York Volunteer Infantry rushes in to support the Federal artillery, in *Simply Murder, The Battle of Malvern Hill*, by Ronn Stern (story, P. 42).

Cover: Frank E. Schoonover's illustration for the *Ladies Home Journal* of Our Famous "Lost Battalion" shows Major Charles Whittlesey replying to a German surrender appeal with "Go to hell!" Whittlesey probably never said those words, and the truth of his command's ordeal was more grim than glorious (story, P. 26).

Cover art: Courtesy of Delaware National Guard Heritage Committee

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The Military History Magazine Poll: Lothar Seifert, interviewed in this issue of *Military History*, claims nearly 1 million German soldiers died in Allied labor and concentration camps after World War II. Do you believe this claim is true?

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Weaponry: The Napoleonic Wars—During the Napoleonic Wars, a British naval officer proposed the use of saturation bombing and chemical warfare.

EDITORIAL

Even great commanders blunder—or encounter someone much greater.

Before he even became sultan, Bayezid made a name for himself at the Battle of Kosovo Polje on June 15, 1389. Serving in the army of his father, Sultan Murad I, Bayezid commanded the right wing of the Ottoman army as it engaged a Serbian force under King Lazar Hrebeljanović. Bayezid's men were holding their own well during the battle, when he learned that the Serbs had managed to rout the Turkish left. With defeat imminent, Bayezid made an impulsive decision to lead his men across the battle line to strike at the Serbs attacking the Turkish left. His unconventional flank attack succeeded in catching the Serbs off guard, throwing them back in disarray, transforming Kosovo from a disaster to a victory, and earning Bayezid the sobriquet of *Yilderim* ("Lightning").

Murad was assassinated at his hour of victory, and after succeeding him, Sultan Bayezid I proved Kosovo not to have been a fluke. On September 25, 1396, he destroyed a crusading army of Western European knights, jointly led (or rather misled) by Burgundian Count Jean de Nevers and Hungarian Emperor Sigismund, at Nicopolis. That crushing defeat left Europe virtually powerless against the prospect of Turkish conquest, but Bayezid turned his attention east instead. By the summer of 1402, he dominated nearly all of Anatolia and was laying siege to Constantinople. At that point, however, he was compelled to suspend the siege to face a new nemesis—an invading Mongol host led by Timur-i-Lenk, better known to Europeans as Tamerlane (principally through Christopher Marlowe's 1590-93 two-part drama, *Tamburlaine the Great*).

This time, Bayezid's strategic mastery failed him—or rather, he was outwitted by an even more clever opponent. After riding around Bayezid's oncoming army, Timur placed himself between the Turks and the Ottoman capital, forcing Bayezid to meet him on ground of his choosing near Ankara on July 20—600 years ago (story, p. 58). Timur continued to control the battle that followed, resulting in Bayezid's defeat and ruin.

Fortunately for the many nations that had suffered untold devastation at his hands, Timur died three years later, but it took the Ottoman Empire a decade to recover from its defeat at Ankara. Europe, in turn, got a reprieve from the Turkish threat,

though it failed to take sufficient advantage of it until the mid-15th century, when a revived Ottoman Empire returned with a vengeance. (Last year, I got to witness the residual consequences of the Turkish conquest of the Balkans, while serving with the 29th Infantry Division [Light] on peacekeeping duty in Bosnia and Herzegovina.)

Bayezid was hardly the only great commander to mar his tally of achievements with a serious blunder. This issue includes another case in the form of Confederate General Robert E. Lee's assault on Malvern Hill 140 years ago (story, p. 42).

After taking command of Confederate soldiers on the Virginia Peninsula, a force he designated the Army of Northern Virginia, Lee blunted a Union probe at Oak Grove on June 25, 1862, then launched a series of attacks against Maj. Gen. George B. McClellan's Army of the Potomac that came to be known as the Seven Days' campaign. Although the battles usually ended either in costly victories or outright defeats for the Confederates, Lee's relentless aggressiveness ultimately succeeded in unnerving McClellan. After losing a division at White Oak Swamp, aka Frayser's Farm, on June 30, McClellan decided to cancel his campaign, begun in May, to take Richmond.

Determined to keep up the pressure, Lee launched assaults on the Yankees on Malvern Hill, unmindful of facing the strongest Federal positions of the campaign, with well-emplaced artillery, while his own troops lacked sufficient artillery support. The result was a calamitous Confederate failure, with 5,355 men lost compared to 3,214 Union casualties.

Under another commander, the Army of the Potomac might have returned to the offensive. But McClellan was already a psychologically beaten man and simply continued his retreat. Richmond would not be threatened for another two years, Lee became the hero of the hour, and his bloody mistake at Malvern Hill was forgotten amid the euphoria.

Lee would go on to win even more remarkable victories in the year to come, clinching his place among history's great generals—until July 3, 1863, when he reprised his Malvern Hill blunder on an even larger scale, near a Pennsylvania town called Gettysburg. J.G.

IMAGE OF THE MOROS

I enjoyed "Fighting Islam's Fierce Moro Warriors" (April 2002), although there are some things author David S. Woolman left unsaid. The term Moro is one of those catch-all terms. Not all so-called Moros are Islamic and there are some pagan tribes as well. When the United States took over the Philippines, it considered Mindanao part of the Philippines. But the Christian part of those islands in reality constituted a separate nation, and when the United States granted independence to the Philippines in 1946 it merely turned over this Islamic area to the Christian Filipinos. The same thing happened when the United States and the British drew a line separating the inhabitants of the southern islands of Sulu and Mindanao from their peoples in Sarawak and Borneo, creating a separate Malaysia and Indonesia. People living there never really understood or obeyed that geographic line well, as history shows. The movie *The Real Glory* shows this distinction between Moros and Filipinos. The Moros are always the bad guys in this film, as they are in the Filipino cinema as a rule. However, I hope your writer will give us more on this in the future.

Halford E. Jones
East Meadow, N.Y.

I agree with David S. Woolman when he implies in his fine article that the U.S. Army had "routed" the "unconquerable" Islamic Moros during the Moro War of the early 1900s in the Philippine Islands. It is interesting to note that those victorious U.S. military commanders on Mindanao Island took a lesson from our first Middle East crisis, the Barbary wars of the early 1800s. In these limited and undeclared wars, American Commodores Richard Dale, Edward Preble and Stephen Decatur displayed great leadership, courage and skill in dealing with thugs. It is so refreshing to learn that our generals and admirals on Mindanao Island showed those same characteristics during the Moro War of the early 1900s.

Evan Dale Santos
Adelanto, Calif.

HE DIED SMILING

Regarding "Blood and Mud at Goose Green" (April 2002), Lt. Col. H. Jones carried the "gung ho" tradition to an extreme. One of his soldiers, Ken Lukowiak, reported that when Jones learned that his regiment was going to the Falklands, he looked "like all his Christmases have come at once."

Jones had a record of being declared "dead" in war games and for leading successful attacks on entrenched positions. He saw no reason to change his tactics now that he was in a real battle. Lukowiak also reported that Colonel Jones was the only dead man he ever saw smiling.

Ken Wollenberg
New York, N.Y.

Congratulations on this excellent article. It was interesting to read an article concentrating on the Argentine side of the battle. To know that many Argentine soldiers fought well and with valor puts the record straight and increases one's regard, both for them and for the British troops who showed such discipline and courage in defeating them.

Bill Purdue
London, England

HISTORY THE WAY IT WAS

I just wanted to say how much I enjoy reading *Military History*. I always hit Barnes & Noble every month looking for your next issue. I love the artwork and I am very pleased that the writers get their facts straight and that there's no politically correct stuff in it. You just write history the way it was, and that's why you have so many readers. I also like that you cover a wide array of military battles and topics, not just a certain few. One complaint that I do have, however, is that the battles of the American Revolution are not covered much. I like that you give the names of credible authors of books that we can buy if we're interested in that particular topic. Don't change anything; you're doing a great job.

Vince Tucker
Tampa Bay, Fla.

FDR AND PEARL HARBOR

In Steven Martinovich's review of *Pearl Harbor Betrayed*, by Michael Gannon (April 2002), the reviewer laments that Mr. Gannon did not completely refute the charges in Robert B. Stinnet's *Day of Deceit: The Truth About F.D.R. and Pearl Harbor*. The reason Gannon did not do so is that he could not. Stinnet's evidence, as shown in his copious notes, interviews with those involved and the time he spent writing the book, is quite convincing.

I am not a conspiracy nut, but there is a good reason for the fact that, even after all these years, Stinnet still could not gain access to certain files regarding Pearl Harbor,

even under the Freedom of Information Act. Believe me, we have not heard the last word on one of the most important events in American history. Other than this difference of opinion with the reviewer, it was your usual fine issue.

Norbert J. Edwards
Buffalo, N.Y.

EDWARD PREBLE

I really enjoyed the April 2002 issue, and particularly the excellent article on Edward Preble, the father of the U.S. Navy, and George Hagerman's fine article on the Battle of the Saintes.

One point, though: Robert Brophy failed to give credit to the most likely source for the commodore's many strict "regulations": Britain's Royal Navy. Such requirements as keeping silent at the guns at outset of battle, placing sand on the decks to soak up blood, etc., would have been familiar to any Jack Tar or George Anson—or George Brydges Rodney or Samuel Hood, for that matter.

Otherwise, the article was superbly written and I look forward to any other contributions these writers make in the future to your fine magazine.

Peter A. Robertson
White Sands, N.M.

'CROSSING THE T'

I read with interest George Hagerman's article, "Naval Battle of the Saintes," in the April 2002 issue. However, I felt that Mr. Hagerman missed an important point. The impression is given that Rodney's tactic of gutting the French line was a spur-of-the-moment decision. In fact, the idea appeared in a manuscript titled *An Essay on Naval Tactics*, by John Clerk, who was, interestingly, a landlubber. Clerk gave a copy to Rodney, who tried it out at the Saintes. The method was later perfected by Lord Horatio Nelson, who used it with devastating effect at Trafalgar. It is now called "crossing the T" and was also used successfully by Japanese Admiral Heihachiro Togo to defeat the Russian navy at Tsushima Strait in 1905.

William E. Hitchins
West Hills, Calif.

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Frederick, Duke of York's legacy was a nursery rhyme and the beginnings of a modern British army.

By Eric Niderost

Frederick Augustus, Duke of York and Albany, is best known to generations of British schoolchildren as the central figure in a popular nursery rhyme. "The noble Duke of York," runs the rhyme, "He had ten thousand men, He marched them up to the top of the hill, And he marched them down again." The poem remains popular to this day, though few who hear it, outside of children who paid attention in their British history classes, would know of the sarcasm that lay behind it.

Notwithstanding that dismissive doggerel, however, the "noble Duke of York" was also a key player in Britain's long struggle with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France. As commander in chief of the British army, he helped institute far-reaching reforms that ultimately helped Albion overcome its implacable Gallic foe. Yet on the surface the Duke of York seemed a poor candidate for any serious undertaking, much less a major program of reforming and restructuring the army.

Frederick Augustus was born in 1763, second son to King George III. The royal family decided that the young duke should have a military career, so he was packed off to Germany in 1780 to begin his martial education. The 17-year-old princeling was welcomed by a number of German rulers, including one of the foremost soldiers of his time, King Frederick II, "the Great," of Prussia, who invited him to army maneuvers each year.

Though the duke's military apprenticeship lasted some seven years, he probably imbibed more liquor than professional precepts. He reveled in the upper-class vices of his time, including gambling, drinking and the avid pursuit of women. He even fought a duel, narrowly escaping death when his opponent's musket ball clipped a curl from the side of his head.



After being made commander in chief of His Britannic Majesty's land forces in April 1798, Frederick Augustus, Duke of York and Albany, subjected the army to some overdue, far-reaching reforms.

The duke's heady round of drink, dueling and dissipation was curtailed, if not entirely eliminated, when Revolutionary France declared war against Britain in February 1793. Britain was ready to take up the gauntlet; the English upper classes feared that revolutionary doctrines might spread to Britain, and the French were swarming into the Austrian Netherlands (now Belgium) and the United Provinces (now the Netherlands). Keeping the Low Countries free of any dominating power was a keystone of traditional British foreign policy.

But if the British nation was prepared for armed conflict, its army was not. Traditionally regarded by many British people with distrust as an instrument of tyranny, the army was neglected in times of peace, and the 1790s saw it afflicted by a deep and nearly fatal malaise. Abuses and corruption permeated the fabric of the army, yet reform was

tardy when there were profits to be made.

One of the worst abuses concerned the purchase of commissions. To initiate a military career, a young man or his family—usually the latter—had to advance a large sum. Once commissioned, an officer had to purchase any higher rank. The system carried the noxious seeds of elitism, because only young aristocrats or wealthy members of the gentry could afford an army career. Promotion by merit was rare. Officers of modest means could be saddled by debt for years, even if they did manage to raise the fees to acquire their commissions.

A swarm of army brokers did a brisk trade in commissions. Their sole criterion was the ability to pay. Schoolboys, even infants, became officers in His Britannic Majesty's land forces. Sir Walter Scott wrote that even young women who could come up with the money were granted commissions, and that he knew one "fair dame who drew the pay of captain in the

dragoons, and was probably not much less fit for service than some who actually did duty."

If the officers were often incompetent aristocrats or ignorant youths, there were also serious problems with the rank and file. Living conditions for the common soldier were abysmal, even by the low standards of the day. Conscripted soldiers included criminals, drunks and social outcasts, joined by impoverished Irishmen and a few naive farm boys or apprentices who volunteered. All of the enlisted soldiers suffered from primitive barracks and rations so scanty that men literally starved, or stole food to survive.

In spite of his youth and inexperience, York was dispatched to Flanders with a British expeditionary force, which was supposed to act in concert with Allied forces under Frederick, Duke of Saxe-Coburg. But the Allies proved quarrelsome and almost fatally uncooperative, ready to abandon the

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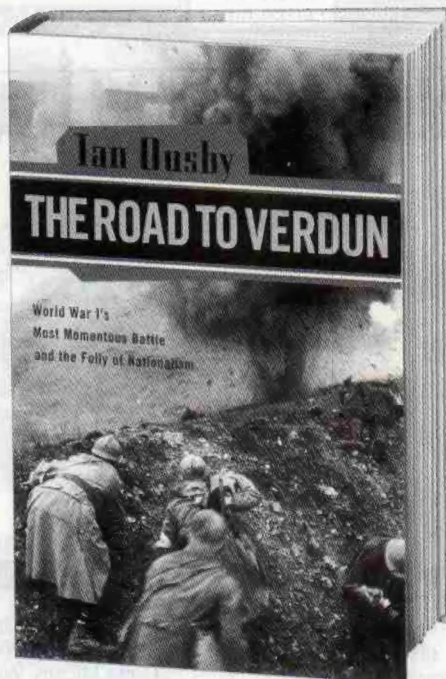
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—The Guardian (London)

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British at the first opportunity. At one point, for example, the Austrians retreated so rapidly that they exposed the British army's flank to the onrushing French.

The Flanders campaign was one of the worst debacles in the annals of the British army. In fact, it equaled, if not surpassed, the later Crimean War misadventure of 1854. The voyage to Flanders was mercifully brief, yet it still gave a foretaste of the horrors to come. When the Brigade of Guards sailed, one soldier recalled, "the men were stowed in holds in such numbers that one third of them were constantly obliged to keep on deck of nights, to afford the others space sufficient to breathe."

Once landed, the British army degenerated into a red-coated rabble. "That we have plundered the whole country is unquestionable," another officer wrote. "That we are the most undisciplined, the most ignorant, the worst provided army that ever took the field is equally certain, but we are not to blame for it."

That sorry state of affairs was not quite universal. The 33rd Regiment of Foot was an effective force, thanks largely to its commander, Lt. Col. Arthur Wellesley. The young colonel, who was experiencing his first campaign, later became the celebrated Duke of Wellington.

Abandoned by his allies, denied adequate support from home and cursed with an antiquated supply system, the Duke of York did the best any general could do under the circumstances, but he became the scapegoat for the army's poor performance. Politicians took up the cry, and York was recalled from Flanders in semidisgrace. It was during this period that the nursery rhyme was composed, though more as a cynical diatribe than as a children's chant.

With York's career at its nadir, King George III appointed him field marshal on the staff in 1795, replacing Lord Jeffrey Amherst, who at 79 was getting senile and out of touch. Field marshal on the staff was an office that evolved into commander in chief of His Britannic Majesty's land forces, to which position the Duke of York was appointed in April 1798.

After York's recall, the British army in Flanders all but disintegrated amid a bitter winter retreat that foreshadowed Napoleon's future exodus from Moscow. Sick, cold, ragged and starving, the survivors were finally withdrawn by ship.

On October 18, 1799, the Convention of Alkmaar brought the Netherlands campaign to an official close. The fiasco had been a valuable learning experience for both York and the future Duke of Wellington. As Wellington recalled years later, "I learnt what one ought not to do."

To many, York's appointment must have seemed a sinecure, a reward to salve the stinging disgrace of his recall. But at that

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HMH

point York rolled up his sleeves and set to work, becoming an outstanding administrator. He could be coarse and often peppered his speech with oaths, yet he was essentially bluff, good-natured and hearty, a kind of John Bull in a bureaucratic china shop. And he was prepared to "break some crockery" to institute reform. The work would not be easy, because the administration of Britain's war machine was a complicated, obtuse affair, a labyrinth of bureaucracies and competing jurisdictions. The secretary at war was head of the War Office, responsible to Parliament for such fiscal concerns as rates of pay and general administrative matters. In 1793, Prime Minister William Pitt had confused matters by creating a war secretary position, with various duties such as raising recruits and planning campaigns.

York was not a brilliant man, but he had common sense. He also had a genuine concern for the rank and file that was unusual for his time and his social position. York first turned his attention to the purchasing of commissions. The system was too entrenched to be abolished, but he could use his royal clout to make changes.

As a first step, York asked for lists naming captains under 12 years old and lieutenant colonels under 18. Henceforth, the commissioning of infants and boys was abolished, and he established a minimum age of 16 for ensigns of infantry and cornets of cavalry. It was also decreed that no officer would be promoted to field rank without six years of experience, or a captain with less than two.

The duke set standards of conduct, training and discipline, and saw to it they were strictly followed. Training manuals were brought up to date. There had been no manual for training with the sword, for example, and in Flanders, British cavalry had tended to lacerate their own horses' heads. The common soldier received a raise in pay, better clothing and greatcoats that offered some protection in foul weather.

Education was also part of York's program. In 1802, he supported the founding of the Royal Military College, an institution that had a junior branch for young officers and a senior branch for more mature officers set on a staff career. The junior branch evolved into the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, while the senior branch became the ancestor of the Staff College, Camberley.

York was also willing to try new ideas and test new theories. After some false starts, the 43rd (Monmouthshire) Line Regiment was converted to light infantry in 1802. There had been British light troops since the Seven Years' War, in the form of elite

companies attached to line regiments. Now they became full-fledged units on their own. York was by no means the "father" of light infantry—Sir John Moore and others deserve credit—but without the duke's royal patronage, such innovations might have been stillborn.

In the spring of 1800, the duke ordered the formation of an experimental corps of riflemen. Rifles were more accurate than the standard "Brown Bess" smoothbore musket, though their slower rates of fire made them impractical for use by the entire army. Yet the French had shown the value of skirmishers, and skirmishers would be more effective if armed with rifles.

Two experienced officers, Colonels Coote Manningham and William Stuart, were entrusted with the experiment, which proved a success. After a series of tests at

the Woolwich Arsenal, the Baker rifle was adopted for this embryonic corps, which became the 95th Rifles in 1802.

Dressed in green camouflage and taught to use their own initiative when circumstances permitted, the riflemen were a far cry from the red-coated automatons of the line regiments. Their marksmanship became legendary. On

The Duke of York abolished the purchase of commissions for infants and set a minimum age of 16.

January 3, 1809, during the Peninsular War, Rifleman Thomas Plunkett of the 95th killed French *Général de Brigade* Auguste-Marie-François Colbert at extreme range, perhaps 300 yards. The 95th Rifles—later expanded into the Rifle Brigade—performed sterling service throughout the Napoleonic Wars.

The Duke of York's career suffered a temporary eclipse due to a major scandal. An ex-mistress, Mary Clarke, had sold commissions and promotions under the table to supplement her allowance from the duke. York himself was apparently innocent of any wrongdoing, and it is significant to note that Clarke came forward with her allegations only after their relationship had ended. Nevertheless, the duke was forced to resign in 1809.

York was reinstated to his old post in 1811 and remained commander in chief of the British army until his death in 1827. Actually, by the time the scandal had broken in 1809, most of his significant reforms were already in place. There would be no more significant army improvements until after the Crimean War in the 1850s.

Frederick Augustus, Duke of York and Albany, deserves to be remembered for more than just a children's nursery rhyme. By instituting much-needed and long-delayed reforms, he played a role in the British army's ultimate triumph over Napoleon in 1815. □

Only luck kept the United States from being occupied by Kaiser Wilhelm II's army between 1899 and 1904.

By Robert Conroy

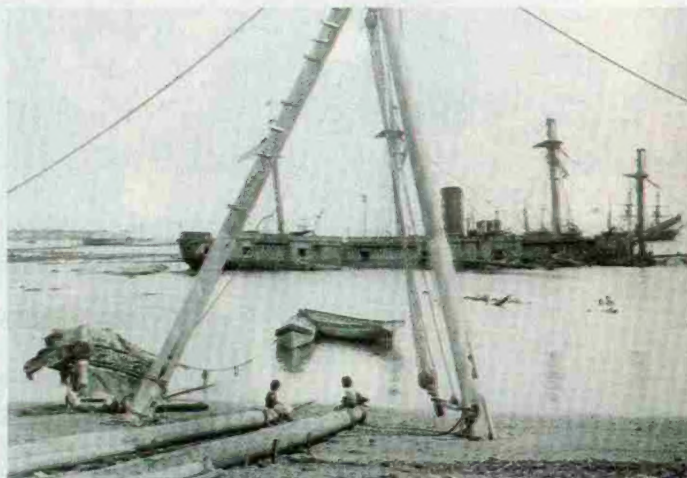
In the gathering gloom of March 15, 1889, the warships of three nations glared at each other in the harbor of Apia, Samoa. Three old wooden U.S. Navy ships—the sloop *Vandalia* and the frigates *Trenton* and *Nipsic*—prepared to fight three newer and more powerful German ships over rights to Samoa. The crew of the Royal Navy's HMS *Calliope* waited and watched, remaining aloof from the showdown.

All of the captains and crews involved had closed their eyes to the threat of sullen skies and rising seas. By the time they realized that the wind and waves were engulfing them it was entirely too late.

When the fury of the typhoon finally subsided, the natives of Samoa beheld an ironic tableau of European technology laid waste by the natural elements. All six American and German ships were wrecked and had washed up on their shores. Only *Calliope* had escaped, after frantically clawing her way out to sea. Scottish-born writer Robert Louis Stevenson, who was then living in Samoa, described the sight of the smashed ships “as schoolboys’ caps tossed on a shelf.” Scores of sailors from each side were dead or injured.

In another touch of grim irony, the storm had been a blessing for the Americans, for they were vastly outgunned by the Germans, and any battle would have been a massacre, with even greater casualties than those caused by nature. But at that point, the colonial rivalry that had brought on the confrontation was forgotten by the protagonists. As the ships lay on their sides, looking more like beached leviathans than warships, German and American survivors aided each other and were themselves helped by both the British and the native Samoans over whom the battle had been so nearly fought.

Back in Germany, however, young Kaiser Wilhelm II simmered in fury when he heard of the disaster. Landlocked in Europe



Struck by a typhoon during a British, German and American confrontation, the U.S. Navy's *Trenton* and *Vandalia*, and Germany's *Adler*, lie aground and wrecked in Samoa's Apia Harbor on March 16, 1889.

and surrounded by nations whose governments mistrusted him, the recently crowned kaiser looked to naval power as a means of expanding Germany's overseas possessions into an empire like Great Britain's. He was upset that other nations—such as France, Holland, Spain and even Belgium—were successfully taking African, Asian and oceanic territories from inhabitants who were powerless to defend themselves. Now it looked as if even the upstart United States was getting into the act.

Germany was an awesome power on the ground, but her navy was small compared to those of other nations, particularly Britain's. The near war off Samoa gave the kaiser yet another incentive to expand his fleet. He was offended that a relatively new and untested international power such as the United States could challenge him and try to deny Germany its rights to an overseas empire. He vowed that the next time would be different, and in late 1889 he ordered the Imperial General Staff to develop plans for a limited but decisive war with the United States.

On May 1, 1898, a U.S. Navy cruiser squadron under Commodore George Dewey won a spectacular victory at Manila Bay, annihilating a Spanish squadron without a single American fatality. But although he was poised to take Manila and the Philip-

pinas, Dewey had no infantry to land and could only steam in tired circles off Cavite and Corregidor. It would be weeks before the division of volunteers forming in California would arrive.

News of the battle had been cabled throughout the world, and no one was surprised when two foreign squadrons, one British and one German, arrived off Manila. The German ships, commanded by Admiral Otto von Diederichs, were significantly more powerful than the American vessels. They had been sent from the German base at Tientsin, on the coast of China, and represented both the expanding German

navy and the kaiser's intentions of becoming a major imperial force outside Europe.

Dewey's victorious squadron consisted of only six small but modern cruisers and a revenue cutter. *Olympia* was the largest, and she was only half the size of the battleships of the day. The powerful new American battleships *Iowa*, *Oregon*, *Massachusetts* and *Indiana* had all converged on Cuba to deal with the Spanish cruiser squadron holed up in Santiago Harbor. The Spanish controlled the telegraph lines from Manila, so Dewey had to send courier ships 600 miles to Hong Kong in order to communicate with Washington. Dewey was on his own in the vast Pacific.

Of great concern to the Americans was the presence of a regiment of German infantry aboard transports that had accompanied the warships. The kaiser had directed Diederichs to steam to the Philippines and gauge American strength and willpower. Upon arrival, the Germans began to rehearse landing procedures, all the while protesting piously that the soldiers on the transports were nothing more than replacement crews for the exhausted German sailors.

To Dewey and his officers, it was evident that the kaiser hoped to relieve the United States of the burden of governing the Philippines. It also seemed that the Spanish government supported the German's in-

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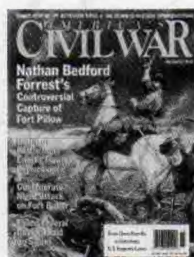
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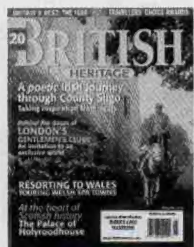


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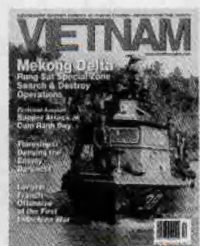
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tentions. In Manila, the Spanish officials were extremely cordial to visiting German officers. Dewey feared that there would be a transfer of power from Spain to Germany, and the United States, despite its victory, would be powerless to stop it.

Like a predator protecting its kill, Dewey set firm rules for the British and the Germans. They could have access to the port, but they also could not land soldiers, and they could not maneuver in certain areas of Manila Bay that Dewey deemed vital to American security. The British complied at once, but the Germans rejected any limits on their actions.

As weeks passed, the Germans maneuvered, trained and strained Dewey's patience. Diederichs continued to send his ships where they were not wanted, and Dewey protested angrily. Finally, Dewey had had enough. As the German cruiser *Cormoran* steamed arrogantly through a forbidden area, the U.S. revenue cutter *McCulloch* signaled her to heave to. When *Cormoran* declined, the diminutive *McCulloch* impudently opened fire. It was the proverbial shot across the bow, and the German ship's crew, stunned, complied immediately.

Once again, the two forces eyed each other warily while the British, secure in knowing that they were the world's foremost naval power, were content merely to observe. The Germans were stronger, but the Americans were confident and battle-tested. More important, they had the leadership of Commodore Dewey, whose genial appearance—including white hair and bushy mustache—disguised the soul of a wolf.

A German emissary called on Dewey to protest the firing on *Cormoran*. Dewey, livid, asked the German officer if Diederichs wanted war. While the German tried to form an answer, Dewey added furiously, "But whether he intends to fight or not, I am ready."

Confronted by Dewey's implacability, Diederichs blinked, and the German squadron returned to its base at Tientsin. In Berlin, the kaiser raged and vowed that the United States would be punished. The general staff was ordered to review their *Winterarbeiten*, or "Winter Plans," for limited war with the United States.

The original German plans called for a landing near Washington, after which the capital city would be captured. That idea was dropped in 1899 in favor of a landing on Long Island. German forces would then take Brooklyn, cut off New York and its vitally important port, and hold the area hostage until negotiations with the United States could be satisfactorily completed.

If the United States still did not see reason at that point, then the steadily reinforced German army would march eastward from New York toward New Haven and Boston. Sooner or later, the kaiser was

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confident that the United States would cede all claims to the Philippines and Puerto Rico, and perhaps even Cuba and Hawaii, to Germany.

The invasion never occurred, and although U.S. government officials were well aware of the friction between the United States and Germany, few knew the extent of it and almost no one gave any thought to the possibility of an invasion. Misplaced confidence in America's ocean moats was total. Only fairly recently have scholars realized that the Winter Plans were more than exercises to keep idle generals busy.

The fact that naval Lieutenant Hubert von Reuber-Paschwitz left his embassy post in Washington and spent several weeks in 1899 trudging over Long Island and Cape Cod indicates that the kaiser's intentions

were serious. His task was to determine where an army could be landed and how it could make its way to New York and then to Boston. It was Reuber-Paschwitz who recommended that the assault up the Potomac be scrapped in favor of an attack on New York.

Had it occurred, a sudden German descent on Long Island would have been far more devastating than the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. The loss of New York and other cities would have been devastating to the American economy, while the military defeat would have been humiliating.

A German assault would have been a walkover. Germany had an army of a half million well-trained and well-equipped men on active duty and a reserve army of yet another half million. The U.S. Army was about one-tenth that total, inadequately armed with obsolescent weapons, poorly trained and led by men of dubious quality. Most of the Army was either in Cuba or, by the time the German plans were updated, far off in the Philippines. An invasion of Long Island would have been met by local police and scant handfuls of militia.

The United States' naval situation was somewhat better. Like Germany, America had been expanding its navy and, with men such as Dewey, might have held its own against Germany's fleet. What would not have occurred, however, was the stopping of an invasion force. Like its army, the United States' navy was scattered, and it would have taken months to bring its battleships, cruisers, destroyers and one submarine into play. Had Germany so wished, a large army could have been living off the

fertile lands of New York and New England, and there would have been precious little that the United States could have done about it.

Could Germany have transported an army across the Atlantic? The answer at that time was a resounding yes. In 1900, Germany sent a sizable force to China to help put down the Boxer Rebellion. If it could send nearly a division to China, it could easily have sent an army to Long Island.

Why then did the kaiser not order the invasion? The answer lies in the character of Wilhelm II, who had become emperor at the age of 28. He was an easily distracted and nervous man who doubted his martial abilities in a Germany that professed to live by war. Worse for his own self image as a warrior king, Wilhelm had a withered left arm.

Extremely self-conscious about his handicapped arm, he usually propped it on the handle of his sword or tucked in the pocket of his jacket.

By the turn of the century, the kaiser had the feeling that people were laughing at him and that the British and French were conspiring against him. As the clouds that would ultimately turn into the storm of World War I gathered, the problems with the United States receded in the kaiser's erratic mind. In any case, cutting America down to size had been secondary to his more ambitious ob-

session of challenging the maritime hegemony of the Royal Navy with a mammoth warship building program. That effort put Germany on a collision course with Britain and yet another budding imperialist naval power, Japan. Ultimately it would be a cause of World War I. Meanwhile, Germany conducted undercover activity against the United States in Mexico until the discovery of the Zimmermann telegram helped drive America into the war against Germany as well.

Had it not been for the kaiser's loss of interest, then a decade's worth of thorough German planning could have been acted on with speed and murderous Teutonic efficiency. It is likely that the United States was about three or four months away from an attack at any time between 1889 and 1904.

America has battled Germany twice in the last 100 years. Had Kaiser Wilhelm II been made of sterner and more consistent stuff, there might have been an earlier war—and the history of the United States could easily have taken a different and less auspicious turn. □

From Scythian poisoned arrows to anthrax dispersal bombs, biological warfare has always been with us.

By Thomas J. Johnson

Recipe: Take the decomposed bodies of several venomous adders, mix with human blood and dung and place in sealed vessels, then bury this mixture until it is sufficiently putrefied. According to the Greek historian Herodotus, 5th-century Scythian archers did exactly that to create poison for the tips of their arrows. Arrows slathered with such noxious goo would qualify as biological weapons, and they must have been nasty ones, indeed.

The use of biological pathogens—bacteria, viruses, fungi and toxins—to kill or incapacitate one's enemies has a long pedigree that includes not only the Scythian arrows, but the poisoned wells of Sparta, Persia, Rome and others. During the Spartan siege of Athens in the Peloponnesian War, a devastating epidemic broke out that killed thousands of Athenians. Thucydides, writing between 431 BC and 404 BC, reported, "It was supposed that Sparta poisoned the wells." Even though Sparta won the Peloponnesian War, public reaction to the idea damaged its reputation considerably. Revulsion at such tactics may still be the first reason that biowarfare agents have seldom been widely employed except by rogue states.

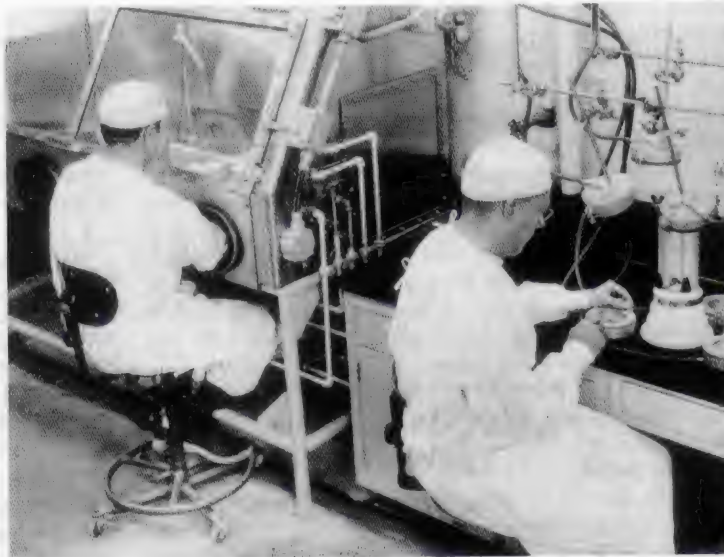
Though remembered for his use of elephants, Carthaginian general Hannibal Barca also showed great ingenuity in biological warfare. He demonstrated naval leadership as well as effective biowarfare in his victory over Eumenes II of Pergamon in 190 BC. Hannibal had earthenware jars filled with venomous snakes taken on board his ships. When Eumenes' ships came within range, the fragile jars were hurled onto the enemy vessels where they broke, discharging their terrifying occupants. The resulting chaos was effective, and Hannibal won easily.

The ubiquitous rat and an outbreak of the bubonic plague among their own warriors worked for the Mongol army besieging

Kaffa in 1346. The Mongols catapulted bodies of plague victims over Kaffa's walls in an attempt to start an epidemic among the residents. The bubonic plague is primarily a disease of rats and other rodents, and only when they become very numerous in close contact with humans does the plague arise in man. The bites of fleas—in this case the Oriental rat flea, *Xenopsylla cheopsis*—transmitted the disease to humans. The fleas on the rats scavenging in the Mongol camp probably traveled on their hosts into Kaffa before the first Mongol died of the plague. The defenders subsequently contracted the disease and abandoned the city to the Mongols. But the biological side of the story wasn't over yet.

Merchants from Genoa had been trading in Kaffa when the Mongols attacked. The surviving Genoese returned to Italy by ship and most likely carried some stowaway rats to Europe when their ships docked in Genoa in October 1347. And so, a few rats with their many fleas disembarked and changed the face of Europe forever as they spread the "Black Death."

Proceeding to the New World, the first recorded "weaponized" biological agent in North America turned up during the French



Continuing an ancient tradition in creating and countering mankind's original weapon of mass annihilation, scientists experiment with dangerous bacteria cultures in Camp Detrick, Md., on May 27, 1957.

and Indian Wars of 1754–1767. The agent was smallpox and the method of delivery was blankets. Sir Jeffrey Amherst, the commander of British forces in North America, formulated a plan to "reduce" the size of Indian tribes hostile to the crown. In the late spring of 1763, there was an outbreak of smallpox in the garrison of Fort Pitt. That produced a bacterial delivery system that the medical world would now refer to as a "fomite," an inanimate object capable of naturally containing or transporting an infectious agent. Blankets and a handkerchief laden with the pus or dried scabs from the smallpox sores of the infected British troops were collected in Fort Pitt's infirmary.

On June 24, 1763, one of Amherst's subordinates, Swiss-born Captain Simeon Ecuyer, ceremoniously gave the blankets and the handkerchief to Delaware Indians invited to confer at the fort. Ecuyer recorded rather chillingly in his diary, "I hope it will have the desired effect." That gift may indeed have had its intended effect—Indian tribes in the Ohio Valley suffered a smallpox epidemic.

Germany may be credited with opening the door to modern biological warfare during World War I, when covert German operatives in Romania infected sheep destined for export to Russia with anthrax. The German legation in Romania had laboratory vessels containing cultures confiscated. Subsequently, the Bucharest Institute of Bacteriology and Pathology identified *Bacillus anthracis* (anthrax). Meanwhile, German saboteurs in France infected horses and mules with those same bacilli. Even before the United States entered the war in April 1917, the Germans tried to carry out covert bacteriological warfare in the United States by contaminating animal feed and infecting horses intended for export.

Continued on page 74

Ghosts of the Lost Battalion

An American Special Forces officer conducts an on-the-scene examination of the tactical decisions facing Major Charles Whittlesey in October 1918.

By Taylor V. Beattie



In the early evening of October 2, 1918, 554 American doughboys whom popular history dubbed the "Lost Battalion" filed down the southern slope of a ravine in the depths of the Argonne Forest in France. Through the bottom of the ravine, a muddy morass, snaked the Charlevaux brook. It was spanned by a narrow plank bridge that the men of the 77th Division lined up to cross, having learned the value of dry feet. Their commander, Major Charles Whittlesey, a lanky, fastidious, former Wall Street lawyer, watched them cross from a ridge behind them. To the north, in the fading light, he could just make out the chalk cliff backdrop of their objective: the Charlevaux Road. Whittlesey's

men had done well. They had managed to slip through an unmanned gap in the German trench line on Hill 198. Now, with the Charlevaux Road in sight, and no German resistance on the hill, Whittlesey took advantage of remaining daylight and ordered his men on to their objective.

They established a position about 300 yards long and 60 yards deep just below the road, on the reverse slope of the hill. Although the slope was steep and rocky, the weary infantrymen dug in swiftly. Machine-gun sections consisting of French Chauchat light machine guns (called "sho-shos" by Americans) and heavy Hotchkiss machine guns were posted on the flanks east and west. Runner

posts had been established every 100 yards back along the route of march to maintain contact with the rear. Patrols coming in reported that the surrounding terrain was clear of enemy, so the position on the reverse slope of the hill seemed to be secure. The exhausted men under Whittlesey's command, whose wool blankets and overcoats had been left in the rear, settled down for a cold but quiet night.

By first light, American patrols sent out on the flanks and rear encountered small German patrols. The Germans who had previously occupied positions on Hill 198 had shifted forces westward 24 hours earlier to reinforce defenses against the French. Once they were satisfied that their western flank was secure for the time being, the Germans began shifting troops back to the trenches on Hill 198. The seam in the defenses through which Whittlesey's unit had infiltrated the previous evening was closed.

At 8:30 a.m., trench mortar shells began to rain in on the Americans from reoccupied German positions. The shells did little damage because of the protection provided by the reverse slope position. At mid-morning word came through that the chain of runner posts to the rear had been broken. Attempts to re-establish the posts were met with heavy machine-gun fire from positions vacated by the Germans the day before. Whittlesey's command was cut off. At noon on October 3, he ordered his officers: "Our mission is to hold this position at all costs. No falling back. Have this understood by every man in your command."

Isolated from friendly forces and surrounded by a determined enemy, the men of the Lost Battalion stood their ground, enduring incessant machine-gun fire, mortar shells, grenades, sniper fire and vicious ground assaults led by flame throwers. For five dreadful days, with cold, thirst, hunger, fatigue, pain-numbing fear, misery and death

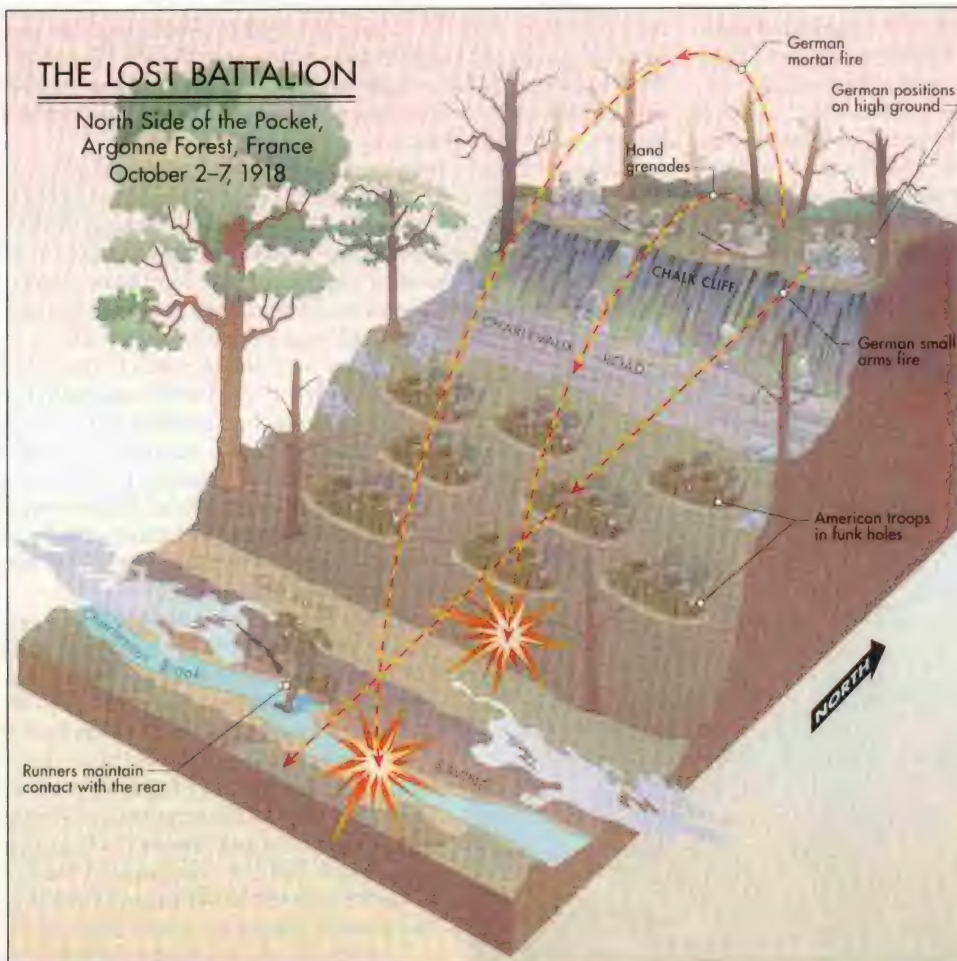
In an illustration titled Our Famous "Lost Battalion" for the Ladies Home Journal, artist Frank E. Schoonover depicted the apocryphal tale in which Major Charles Whittlesey supposedly roared "Go to hell!" in reply to a German appeal to surrender.



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THE LOST BATTALION

North Side of the Pocket,
Argonne Forest, France
October 2-7, 1918



Major Whittlesey's position provided a modicum of cover but could not protect his men from friendly fire. Not indicated in this cutaway depiction is the fact that the Lost Battalion was surrounded.

tionary Force (AEF) described by General John J. Pershing as the "three outstanding heroes of the World War," went out on deck and stepped over the rail and into eternity somewhere in the Atlantic. His body was never recovered.

On a late February afternoon 80 years after Colonel Whittlesey took his life, I am on Hill 198, at the southern edge of the Charlevaux Valley, looking into what was called the pocket. I stand at the military crest peering north into the ravine below, a sight that would have been familiar to Whittlesey at 5:15 p.m. on October 2, 1918. With imagination working and military intuition reeling, I get a growing sense of understanding of how events may have unfolded here more than 80 years ago.

I have been to the site of the Lost Battalion's agonies on numerous occasions. Each time that I have departed, my spirit has been unsettled, bothered by many questions that surge through my mind. Why did Major Whittlesey choose the reverse slope to hunker down within arm's length of his objective, instead of occupying the dominant high ground to the north and south? Why were 554 men, a battalion and then some, pinned down during the initial stages of the siege by a contingent a fraction of their number?

their constant companion, the men of the Lost Battalion held on, long past hope for relief. On October 7, of the 554 77th Division men who had entered the ravine, 194 officers and enlisted men staggered out, bearing 107 dead and 159 wounded. Six Medals of Honor and a number of Distinguished Service Crosses would be awarded for actions in, around and over the so-called pocket. In a sad, significant postscript to the entire affair, Whittlesey, the Lost Battalion's commander, apparently took his own life in November 1921, three years after the world war ended. A suicide it appeared, meticulously planned. "I wish they would let me forget," Whittlesey wrote. "[N]ot a day goes by but I hear from some of my old outfit, usually about some sorrow or misfortune.... I cannot bear much more. I want to be left in peace...."

On November 11, 1921, the third anniversary of the end of the war, Whittlesey with some 30 other Medal of Honor recipients attended the interment of the first Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. In the weeks to follow, Whittlesey, now a lieutenant colonel, drafted his own will and fine-tuned notes to his firm's pending law cases, ensuring, it now appears, that legal associates could seamlessly resume litigation in Whittlesey's stead.

On Thanksgiving Day 1921, Charles Whittlesey boarded SS *Tolosa*, a passenger-carrying freighter bound for Havana, Cuba. Through the course of his last day with the living, Whittlesey wrote a number of letters to close friends and relatives and a note to the ship's captain providing detailed instructions for the disposition of the baggage left in his stateroom. Whittlesey spent the evening in the ship's saloon, engaged in casual conversation about the war with a passenger named Maloret. Abruptly, Whittlesey rose from the table and announced that he was going to bed. The Medal of Honor recipient, one of three members of the American Expedi-

Even on warm days, with the sun shining overhead, the ravine remains cold and gloomy, the warming rays cut off by a thick interlaced canopy of trees. The ground smells of rotting leaves, fertile soil and mud with just a hint of sulfur from the marshy ground surrounding the brook. It is deathly quiet in the pocket. I slow my pace self-consciously, as one does who bursts in on a church service in progress, suddenly, painfully, aware of the faux pas. I fear that I am making too much noise for this hallowed ground.

The story of the Lost Battalion cannot be completely understood without an examination of the command environment and associated chain of events that contributed to the saga of the ravine at Charlevaux. As a point of departure, it is good to understand that the Lost Battalion was neither lost, nor a battalion. The battalion was in fact a composite unit made up of Companies A, B and C of the 1st Battalion, commanded by Major Whittlesey, and Companies E, G and H of the 2nd Battalion, 308th Infantry Regiment, under the command of Captain George McMurry. The unit also included Company K of the 307th Infantry under the command of Captain Nelson Holderman and Companies C and D of the 306th Machine Gun Battalion. Whittlesey was the senior officer and therefore in command of the whole.

As for being "lost," nothing could be further from the truth. The members of the Lost Battalion knew exactly where they were—

trapped on the reverse slope just below their objective, the road at Charlevaux Mill. The Lost Battalion's higher headquarters—brigade, division, corps up through the AEF and General Pershing—knew where they were. More important, the Germans overlooking and surrounding the position knew exactly where they were. In fact, the Germans, members of the 76th Reserve Division, referred to the battalion in their communications as the *Amerikanenest* (American Nest). The Germans had occupied the region for some time and knew the area inside and out. They were not the best troops in Kaiser Wilhelm II's army, consisting largely of older reservists, but the difficult terrain of the Argonne Forest leveled the playing field. Capitalizing on the advantages of defending in rough terrain, the Germans augmented the natural barriers of the forest with barbed wire obstacles, which canalized movement into meticulously planned kill zones, serviced by small arms, grenades, machine guns and trench mortar fire.

With respect to the big picture, the American First Army was fresh off its first bloodletting, reducing the St. Mihiel salient, and was now engaged in the Meuse-Argonne offensive, part of the overall Allied operation under Marshal Ferdinand Foch. While the offensive had started off well for the Americans, on September 26, 1918, it had bogged down rapidly due to a combination of bad weather, restrictive terrain and tough German resistance. Foch was impatient with the AEF's progress, noting that adjacent French armies seemed to be pulling ahead of American gains; the resulting gaps would constitute a threat to the Allied flanks. Ranking members of the French command suggested that French staff officers be incorporated into the leadership of U.S. divisions. Foch, a man of action, now toyed with the notion of directing the French Second Army to take over the U.S. I Corps.

Since the early days of AEF involvement, General Pershing had waged a constant fight to keep the AEF together, rather than piecemealed out to Allied forces. Pershing perceived Foch's plan as yet another attempt to parcel out the U.S. Army among Allied forces. Beside himself with anger and frustration, Pershing held off Foch's plan and demanded immediate action and results from his subordinate commanders across the Meuse-Argonne front. The pressure now levied on U.S. corps and division commanders to produce results was intense.

A surprising twist to the Lost Battalion's story, overshadowed by the hoopla of post-war legend, is the fact that Major Whittlesey's command was cut off and surrounded not once but twice in the 10-day period of September 28 to October 7, 1918. On September 28, the third day of the Meuse-Argonne drive, Major Whittlesey and his 1st Battalion, 308th Infantry, continued the attack north into the heart of the Argonne

Forest. Following close in support was Captain McMurtry's 2nd Battalion, 308th Infantry. A stockbroker by trade but an adventurer at heart, McMurtry had left Harvard University at the outbreak of the Spanish American War to serve with Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders throughout the Cuban campaign. In 1917, he left Wall Street, this time to enlist and receive a commission as a first lieutenant. McMurtry had a reputation as a rough and tumble, fearless yet cheerful commander, possessing boundless optimism, for which he was loved and respected by his troops.

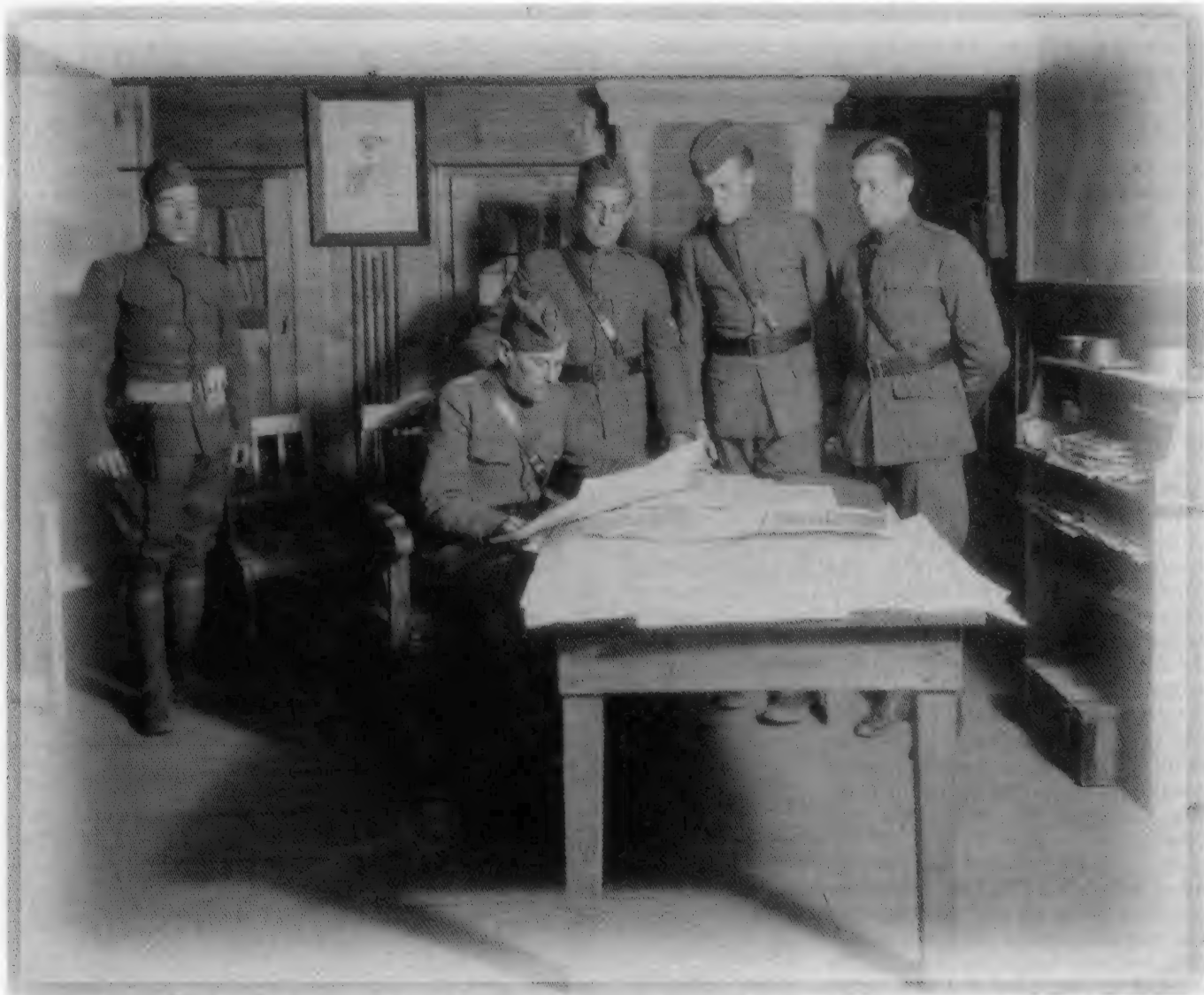
The going was tough and Whittlesey's unit slugged it out, employing small platoon-size groups of skirmishers to work through the thick, enemy-infested terrain. Captain McMurtry's battalion was in support of Whittlesey's main effort. Always looking for a good scrap, McMurtry used the frequent enemy contacts in the forest as an excuse to bring his command forward to fight alongside Whittlesey's battalion. At 5:15 p.m. on the 28th, Whittlesey's command had advanced to a point about a kilometer south of Binerville. As the sun was setting, Whittlesey chose the reverse slope of *Mort Homme* (Dead Man's) Hill to establish the combined battalion headquarters for the night. Companies were placed in a square perimeter and runner posts established. Whittlesey's unit occupied the far left flank of the U.S. lines.

Liaison between American and adjoining units had been poor in the forest, and on this date there had been no liaison at all. French units operating on Whittlesey's left had fallen back due to stiff German resistance. A large gap now existed on the left flank. The Germans took advantage of it and, under the cover of dark-



Major Charles Whittlesey (left), commander of the 1st Battalion of the 308th Infantry Regiment, 77th Division, is shown with a Major Kenny of the 3rd Battalion, 307th Infantry, on October 29, 1918.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES



NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Major General Robert Alexander, commander of the 77th Division, studies aerial photographs of the Argonne sector on October 20, 1918. It was Alexander who ordered that anyone withdrawing from ground once held would be booted out of the Army.

ness, infiltrated behind Whittlesey's force. By next morning Whittlesey knew that his runner posts were cut off from the rear. He sent back a message by carrier pigeon to 308th regimental headquarters, describing the situation and position of his unit. The regimental commander, Lt. Col. Frederick E. Smith, directed that all detachments lost in the woods should be collected and reorganized for further orders. Then Colonel Smith took off with a small detachment to relieve his friend Whittlesey.

Proceeding down a path that he believed led to Whittlesey's position, Smith's small detachment encountered a machine-gun position. Smith called out to seek cover and was immediately wounded in a leg. Covering his men as they withdrew, Smith fired his 45.-caliber semiautomatic into multiple machine-gun positions alerted to his presence. Smith fell again, this time severely wounded by a bullet in his side. Regaining his footing, he again fired into the German positions until his men were safe. Refusing medical treatment, Smith obtained grenades with which to attack the enemy positions, but he was hit for the third time and fell mortally wounded. For his gallant efforts to reach Whittlesey's unit and to protect his own men, Smith was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor on February 20, 1919. His was the first Medal of Honor awarded to anyone in the Lost Battalion. Whittlesey con-

tinued to hold until late afternoon on September 30, 1918, when elements of the 308th broke through and relieved the weary force. Thus ended the first chapter of the Lost Battalion saga.

Major Whittlesey reported back to headquarters, where familiar orders were once again issued: "...advance independently without regard for exposed flanks or contact with adjacent units. Upon reaching the objective of the day, dig in and hold out for the rest of the Division to catch up." Whittlesey protested up the chain of command that his unit was exhausted and down to half strength from the bitter fighting in the preceding days. The 77th Division commander, Maj. Gen. Robert Alexander, aware of Pershing's state of mind and desiring to keep his job, flatly denied the request.

The unit moved out in the attack and, as the sunlight faded after a long day of fighting, at 5:15 p.m. on October 2, Whittlesey stood at the military crest on the north side of Hill 198 looking down into Charlevaux Valley. In an examination and analysis of the terrain and situation some 80 years after the fact, I believe that Major Whittlesey crested Hill 198, realized it would soon be dark and went down into the ravine to take the road (his objective) clearly seen from his position. Sacrificing security for speed, I suspect Major Whittlesey wanted to get his unit dug in

and settled before nightfall. There were three options available to him: Pull back to defensible terrain on Hill 198; get to the road and set up there; or press forward and take the high ground just north of the road. Heeding his orders and numerous threats about withdrawing from ground once held, Whittlesey elected to hunker down on the reverse slope just under the objective and wait for the rest of the division to catch up.

Back in the pocket, February 2000: In the valley, the floor is soft with odorous, calf-deep muck. The stream, about 2 meters wide, meanders lazily through the valley running west into Charlevaux Mill. To the left (west) there is a large pond (the stream was dammed sometime after the war and was an open field in 1918). With careful scanning, it is relatively easy to spot chunks of rusted shell that sliced through the ravine 80 years ago. On the west side of the stream, there are what would appear to be a number of small pools, one to 2½ meters across. These are the old shell holes dug by mortar and artillery rounds that rained into the pocket for five days. A misguided American artillery barrage, meant to relieve German pressure on the unit, probably made a number of those holes. Somewhere back in the rear, a U.S. field artillery officer had transposed the map coordinates for the American position; the "friendly" barrage fell on the American positions. "Our own artillery is dropping a barrage directly on us," read the last carrier pigeon message out of the pocket. "For heaven's sake, stop it!"

On the north side of the stream are the remains of an old road. While little more than a path today, this road would have provided a high-speed avenue of approach from east or west into Whittlesey's position. Seeing this, Whittlesey had divided the nine available machine guns to cover both ends of the road, protecting his flanks. The slope of the hill rises to the road. About 75 meters is steep and difficult to climb. The soil is loose and rocky, and at times arms and legs are both needed to keep from sliding back. The men of the Lost Battalion dug their funk holes right into the side of the hill, which provided a modicum of protection from the plunging fire from the German positions above. It did not, however, provide cover from the machine-gun fire coming from the reoccupied German positions across the ravine to the south.

With a desire to understand the situation presented to a trapped rifleman in the pocket, I plop down into a number of remaining fighting positions to get a feel for the terrain. There is no rhyme or reason to the spacing or disposition of the pits. They are placed where I imagine exhausted soldiers found some room to dig. I hunker down into each position, trying to determine available fields of fire from the hole. In all positions, fields of fire and observation north is limited to the crest of the road. If I lift my head and body high enough to see the cliff, I know I could have been seen from the German positions above. From that position in October 1918, as the old infantryman's adage goes, "If you can be seen, you can be hit, and if you can be hit you can be killed." Observation and fields of fire are relatively clear for 50–75 meters or more on the east and west flanks.

A variety of artifacts is strewn in and around these positions. My eye catches an unfired U.S. 30.06 bullet resting on some moss, plainly visible. The bullet, tarnished brown with age, is in otherwise good shape, the primer intact. Chambered into a rifle today, I'd bet a case of beer it would fire. The bullet holds its own secrets. Ammunition in the Lost Battalion position was at a premium and resupply meant stripping a dead buddy's body of remaining ammo. How and why was this bullet here?

What the men in the pocket endured is difficult to comprehend, more so to explain. As time dragged on, machine-gun fire, mortars, grenades, flame throwers, cold, thirst and hunger all took their toll. Hardened soldiers wept at the pitiful moans of wounded comrades

beyond help, hanging onto life in adjacent funk holes. Sticky blood-soaked bandages and puttees (leg wraps) were removed from the dead to use on the living. Each morning, Whittlesey would arrange burial details. Burying the dead was hard work for men weakened by starvation and exposure. Digging was done at best from a kneeling position, but most commonly lying on one's side. Any click of an entrenching shovel against a rock or an observed flutter of movement was answered with a hail of machine-gun fire from the opposite ridgelines. During the frequent mortar and artillery attacks, interred comrades would at times be blown free of their hasty graves to rejoin living soldiers in the cramped funk holes. And yet,



PHOTOS: TAYLOR V. BEATTIE

Top: A recent photo of a German bunker in the Argonne Forest near Binarville. **Above:** The present-day marker located on the Charlevaux Road above the position held by the Lost Battalion. Whittlesey's position packed 554 men into an area some 300 yards wide and 60 yards deep, with machine guns posted at both flanks but handicapped by severely restricted fields of fire.



Survivors of the Lost Battalion rest shortly after their ordeal. When relief finally came, only 194 members of the battalion were able to walk out of the position. Casualties totaled 107 officers and men killed and 159 wounded.

the living members of the Lost Battalion hung on. Whittlesey, McMurtry and Holderman regularly made the rounds to each funk hole, offering words of encouragement to their men. McMurtry would often say, "It's all right boys. Everything's practically OK!"

Legendary accounts claim that Whittlesey shouted "Go to hell!" as a response to a German appeal for surrender. The reality is that Whittlesey said nothing and ordered the white panels, laid out as a signal for aircraft, taken in lest they be mistaken for a white flag of surrender. In an almost anticlimactic spin of fortune, the Germans, feeling pressure from attacks to the north, pulled out of the area surrounding the pocket. At 7 p.m. on October 7, five days into the ordeal, the first U.S. patrols made contact with the Lost Battalion, not relieving it but incorporating it into friendly lines.

On the Charlevaux Road looking down into the pocket, February 2000: The sun has dropped beyond the hill. It won't be long now before night covers the pocket. In keeping with a personal tradition started at least six visits ago, I pull my bottle of French wine from the trunk of the car and raise it in salute to the men of the Lost Battalion. After a hearty draw, I consider the slope of the pocket momentarily and try to imagine the view 80-some years ago. In my mind's eye I see a sea of tin hats below me. Pale, dirty faces rimmed with black grimy stubble peer up from their funk holes with a fixed melancholy stare. Then a genuine insight occurs—there are 554 men jammed into a 300-by-60-yard box. They are all bunched up, so that only those on the perimeter of the defense could engage me. Fields of fire are severely restricted for those in the middle. The Lost Battalion can only bring a fraction of its available firepower to bear in any direction. Those in the middle can only be marginally combat effective in a ground attack. Major Whittlesey, a citizen soldier like so many others in the AEF, had been promoted beyond his martial experience and abilities. He had made a junior officer mistake.

In his desire, largely due to an oppressive command environment, to attain and hold the objective, combined with a need to keep all in his charge together and under immediate personal control, Whittlesey had bunched 554 men together on the side of a hill within arms' reach of his objective. In his mind he had accomplished his mission. In establishing his force on the hillside, bunched as they were, Whittlesey unconsciously allowed an initially smaller force to find, fix and gradually hack away at his command with mortars, grenades and machine-gun fire. The saving grace, in the end, was Whittlesey's decision to use the reverse slope, which provided the 1st Battalion with a modicum of cover and concealment from observed fire.

The sun has set—the pocket is dark. It will be another year at least before I return to visit the Lost Battalion. I will be back. In spite of the fact that I now have some notion as to how a smaller German force was able to find, fix and pick apart Whittlesey's command, a bigger question now lingers. Within the heroic legend that blossomed from the misery of the Lost Battalion, a gray core remains, begging the question: Was all of this necessary? It is a question that I am sure rested heavily on Charles Whittlesey's mind as he mounted the rail of SS *Tolosa* and peered into the black waters below. □

Taylor V. Beattie is a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Special Forces. For further reading, the author recommends: *The Lost Battalion*, by Irving Werstein; and *The Lost Battalion*, by Thomas M. Johnson and Fletcher Pratt.

For detailed discussion, first-person accounts and academic analyses of "the war to end all wars," visit militaryhistory.about.com/features.

T For further reading on the Lost Battalion, see "Goal With Price to be Paid," by Thomas Fleming, appearing on TheHistoryNet.com beginning July 22, 2002.

FATAL DECISION AT BLUE LICKS

Against the good advice of Daniel Boone, a hotheaded major caused the bloodiest tragedy ever for the Kentucky frontier militia.

By James Graves

During the American Revolution, pioneers from western Pennsylvania southward fought two wars simultaneously. Besides supplying troops to the Continental forces, they fought off Indian attacks as fierce as any by Redcoats in the East. Their grim defense prevented Indian incursions into the interior of the former colonies even as war-weary backcountry riflemen finally witnessed the surrender of the army of Lord Charles Cornwallis at Yorktown, Virginia, on October 17, 1781. But the American victory at Yorktown was no deterrent to the Shawnees, Miamis, Mingos, Wyandots, Ottawas and other hostile tribes in the West. With arms and incitement from the British in Canada, the Indians fought on without letup.

Meanwhile, Americans in the East halted even the scant assistance they had been sending west. With no resources but their own, the new Westerners were left to confront a highly mobile, skilled and dedicated enemy. For 13 years after Yorktown their obscure war dragged on. In thinly settled Kentucky alone, estimates of settlers killed or captured between 1782 and 1790 range up to 1,500. Meanwhile, perhaps an equal number of migrants were





WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, ST. LOUIS-BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY

American artist George Caleb Bingham's painting depicts Daniel Boone escorting settlers through the Cumberland Gap to the western wilderness of Kentucky, where colonial Americans simultaneously fought both the British and hostile native American tribes.



The battle at Blue Licks on the Licking River (upper center) is often called the last battle of the Revolutionary War because Kentuckians engaged both Indians and British soldiers there.

slain while boating down the Ohio River from Pittsburgh to Kentucky. So bloody, in fact, was the first year after Yorktown that the frontier people called 1782 "the Year of Sorrow."

Especially sorrowful for them was the battle fought at the Blue Licks in northeastern Kentucky. The drama enacted there on August 19, 1782, unfolded like a Greek tragedy.

In the predawn hours of August 16, 1782, 300 warriors—Shawnees and a few Wyandots—arrived at Bryan's Station, a stockaded settlement on the Elkhorn River, six miles north of the recently established settlement of Lexington, Ky. They were nominally under the command of British officers William Caldwell, Matthew Elliott and Alexander McKee. The three were tough American woodsmen who had been secret Tories before officially entering the king's service. All three, moreover, were well respected by Britain's Indian allies.

Another American Tory and woodsman, the magnetic Simon Girty, was the de facto leader of this Indian force. Girty was accompanied on this expedition by his youngest brother, George. Simon, George and the middle Girty brother, James, were great friends of the Indians. In fact, they were very nearly Indians themselves, having been captured on the Pennsylvania frontier while

teenagers and raised by the Senecas, Delaware and Shawnees, respectively. Freed after several years of captivity, the Girtys intimately knew the ways of both races, but finally chose the Indian ways. Early in the Revolutionary War, they defected from American service, resumed their former life among the tribes and became leaders of war parties attacking the Western pioneer settlements. Simon in particular had won a name for himself among the Indians for his skill as a tactician. On more than one occasion he is said to have aided white captives, but his role in leading bloody scalping expeditions assured that, like his brothers, he was universally hated by the settlers.

At Bryan's Station, Simon Girty intended to surprise the garrison. When the men left the stockade to perform their daily chores, the warriors would catch them unawares. Fortunately for the men at Bryan's Station, they had no intention of leaving the stockade that morning. A day earlier they had learned that Hoy's Station, south of them, was under attack, and they were busy inside the stockade with preparations to ride to the aid of Hoy's. Unknown to the settlers, Girty had arranged

the attack on Hoy's as a diversion to draw off strength from Bryan's, his main target. Had he arrived at Bryan's a few hours later, his plan might have worked, for the bulk of its defenders might already have departed, and he could easily have overwhelmed the weakened garrison. August 16 was not Girty's day, but a better one was fast approaching.

In a second turn of luck, the settlers spotted the Indians beforehand without their knowledge. As a result, couriers from Bryan's Station galloped at once to fetch reinforcements from nearby stockades. Seeing them ride off, Girty suspected their purpose. Uncertain where they were riding, he acted on the hope that the Indians still would have the advantage of surprise. Accordingly, he kept his warriors under cover and let the horsemen pass. Meanwhile, the garrison stationed concealed riflemen on the walls. If the Indians mounted an assault, the surprise would be on them.

The station's Achilles' heel was its spring, located outside the stockade. Now lurking Indians controlled the access to water, and without water in parched August, the settlers had no hope of withstanding a siege. After a parley, the leaders at Bryan's reluctantly approached the women of the station with a grave proposal. Within minutes the women determined to stake their lives on a

CAPTURED AND RAISED BY INDIANS, SIMON GIRTY WAS A CUNNING LEADER

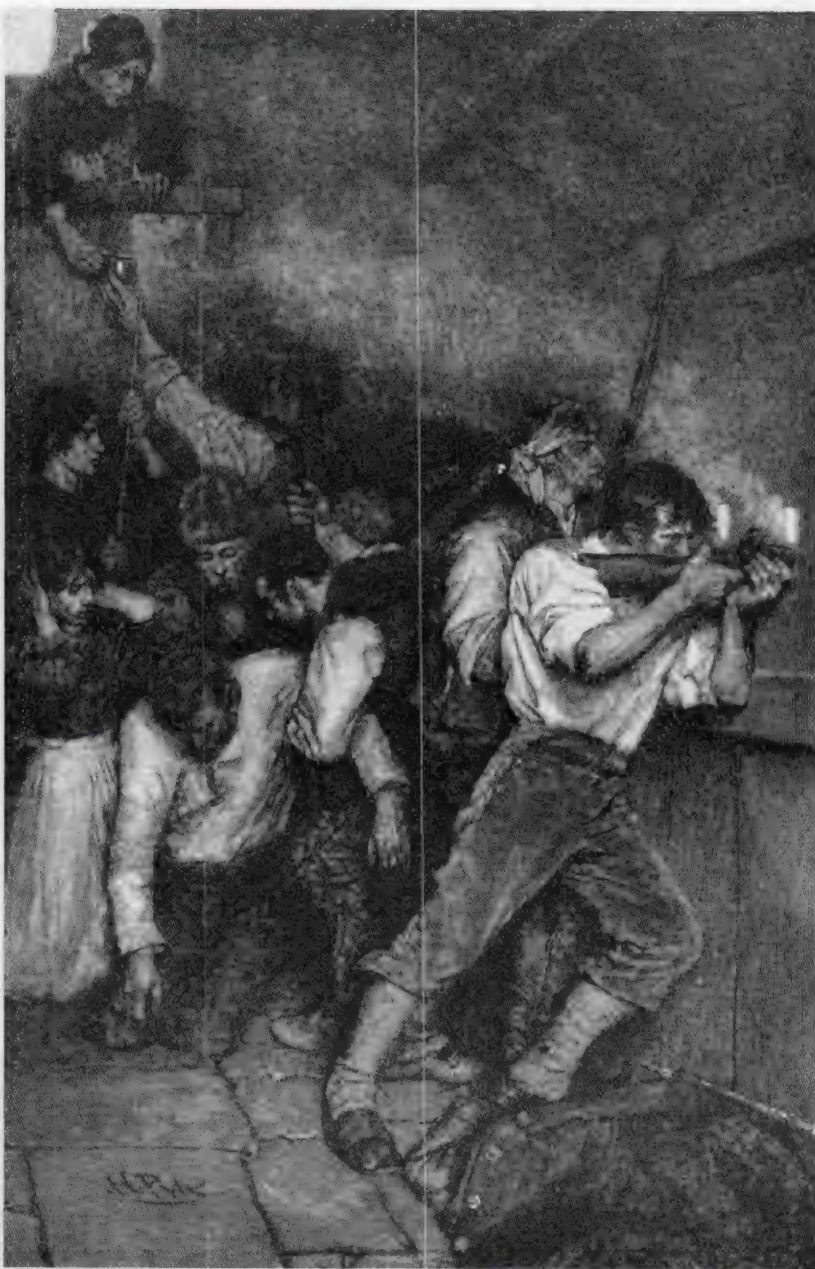
desperately risky ruse. Without delay, they gathered within the stockade and said a brief prayer. Then, as they did every morning, by twos and threes they strolled outside the fence, carrying their pails to the spring, then filled them with water and sauntered back into the stockade. Behind a bluff of chattering insouciance the women hid their dread. As they had hoped and prayed, the Indians held their fire and continued to wait for the men to emerge. The women had brought Bryan's Station a fighting chance to survive.

A short time later, Girty's patience wore thin, and he ordered an assault—but true to type, he employed a cunning ruse. At his signal, a few loudly whooping warriors designated as decoys raced toward one wall of the stockade. Meanwhile, he held his main force under cover but deployed to assault the opposite wall. When the decoys fled at the first sound of gunfire from the wall, the militiamen—dubbed “Long Knives” by the Indians—sallied to pursue them. Girty assumed that his plan was working and that the entire garrison was chasing the decoys. Now he threw his main force against the presumably undefended opposite wall. But the seasoned Long Knives had been wise to his ruse and had stealthily moved some 30 riflemen to the wall facing the main attack. When the massed braves charged blindly into range, the Long Knives poured rifle balls into them. As the stunned warriors turned tail, the women of Bryan's Station passed loaded rifles to the sharpshooters, then reloaded the empties and handed them back. Until the braves passed beyond range, the militiamen continued to mow them down.

A quick tally told Girty that the stockade's defense numbered 44 riflemen. Hours later, 16 pioneer reinforcements galloped into Bryan's through a hail of Indian musket balls. Now 60 rifles guarded the stockade. Girty was disappointed but not nonplussed. Again he resorted to craft. From a safe distance, he yelled to the garrison that artillery would reach him that night, after which he would smash the palisades. Surrender now and live, or die later was his offer to the garrison. No artillery was actually en route, yet Girty's threat seemed real enough to the beleaguered settlers. The defenders bitterly remembered how British cannons had smashed the walls of nearby Ruddle's Station two years earlier. Yet they also recalled how the Indian allies of the British had massacred the settlers as soon as they had laid down their arms on the promise that their lives would be spared. That stark truth gave the lie to Girty's promise to spare the garrison at Bryan's.

After a nervous silence, a young militiaman, Aaron Reynolds, took it upon himself to call Girty's bluff. With a volley of fluent profanity, Reynolds declared that the garrison would fight.

Bryan's Station was proving tougher than Girty had reckoned. Could still more reinforcements be approaching? A change of plans seemed in order. Girty directed the warriors to destroy the crops around the stockade, burn outlying buildings and slaughter the livestock. That done, he led the warriors slowly off to the northeast.



When notorious Indian leader Simon Girty threw his main force at what he thought was an undefended wall of Bryan's Station, 30 seasoned Kentucky sharpshooters fired into the charging braves while the women of the fort reloaded rifles.

The next day, substantial reinforcements reached Bryan's. Their commanding officers were Colonel Stephen Trigg and Major Hugh McGary, both of Harrodsburg, at the head of the Lincoln County militia, together with Colonel John Todd of Lexington and Lt. Col. Daniel Boone, leading Long Knives from Fayette County.

The 50 men immediately under Boone came from around Boonesborough and from Boone's Station, near the frontier legend's homestead on Marble Creek. Suggesting the clanlike makeup of units common in frontier armies, Boone's command included three nephews, three cousins and Israel, his 23-year-old son. Israel happened to be sick when the men mustered to ride to

OF SCALPING RAIDS ON THE WHITE SETTLEMENTS.



HARPER'S NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE

On the morning of August 19, 1782, the Kentucky militia approached a hilltop overlooking this ford on the Licking River, where they spotted two warriors lounging in the open. Daniel Boone concluded that they were decoys and advised that the militia wait for relief forces to arrive.

Bryan's, and a family tradition has it that young Boone dragged himself from bed and accompanied the army only after his father had sternly reminded him of his duty.

Word had come that Colonel Benjamin Logan was en route from Logan's Station (present-day Stanford, Ky.) with 400 more Long Knives. Even in Logan's absence, upon finding the enemy gone, Todd and the other officers began laying a plan of pursuit. During their conference, Major McGary suggested that they remain at Bryan's until Logan came up. McGary was known to be unstable and hotheaded, but he was an intrepid Indian fighter. Cautious advice from him may have struck Colonel Todd as being out of character. In any case, Todd called McGary's suggestion "timid" and proposed that the force set out at once, lest the Indian raiders escape. It was not the militia's habit to permit raiders to escape unharried, Todd reminded the officers. The reinforcements on hand, together with men from Bryan's, rode in pursuit. In all, they numbered fewer than 200. No one seems to have noticed that Todd's mild rebuke had stuck in McGary's craw, and as the pursuit advanced, the major's mercurial temper continued to rise.

When retreating, the Indians usually broke up into small parties and took measures to hide their trails. Yet this group was traveling together and leaving a clear trail. They were, however, trying to conceal their numbers by walking in each other's footprints—indications that should have alarmed seasoned Indian fighters. As it happened, only Boone caught on. He warned the rest of the group that they were being lured into a trap. Boone, who was then 48, had earned a reputation as a keen woodsman and an uncan-

nily accurate forecaster of Indian intentions. Unfortunately, this was one of those unaccountable times when experience and good sense—even the instinct for self-preservation—counted for naught in the heat of the moment. In any case, Boone's warning was disregarded by his comrades.

As the march progressed, the trail grew fresher. Early on August 19, two days after they had set out, the militiamen approached the salt deposits in northeastern Kentucky known as the Upper Blue Licks, in present-day Robertson County, some 48 miles northeast of Lexington (via U.S. 68). On a hilltop a half-mile beyond a ford over the Licking River, the pioneers spotted two warriors lounging in the open. The officers dismounted and conferred. Some concluded that the braves were stragglers lagging in the wake of the fleeing warriors, but Boone thought they were decoys. He was closely acquainted with the tangled landscape and knew danger lay ahead. The crest of the hill was, he warned, cut by gullies large enough to conceal the host of braves that was no doubt lurking there. The pursuers would do well to wait for Logan, he advised. Failing that, he added, they should at least send half their force upriver and take the Indians in a pincers movement.

Colonel Todd agreed with Boone. So did some of the junior officers, but not Major McGary, who truculently called Boone's courage into question. While Boone was angrily protesting, "I guess I can go as far in an Indian fight as any man," McGary remounted, brandished his rifle and spurred his horse into the water. "Them that ain't cowards follow me," he yelled, "and I'll show where the yellow dogs are!"

THE KENTUCKY IRREGULARS WERE LONG ON DASH AND PLUCK, BUT FATALLY

In a regular army McGary would immediately have been placed under arrest. But the Long Knives were irregulars, militiamen typically short on discipline and long on impulse and dash. This, together with the high worth the militia set on their reputation for valor, may explain why McGary's challenge overpowered the irregulars' good sense. First the men at large, then the officers—including Boone—fell in behind the insubordinate major.

On the far bank the officers succeeded in forming the men into columns under Trigg, Todd and Boone. Then, except for a few officers who remained mounted, they left their horses at the river and pressed quickly up the hill on foot. The moment McGary and a score of Harrodsburg men in the van reached the crest, the "yellow dogs" sprang the trap. Braves concealed behind rocks and trees on both flanks and in their front raised the war cry and opened fire. Of the entire van, only three men escaped the sudden fusillade.

By then, the three columns following had separated and lost sight of each other. The left-hand column was Boone's. As he pushed forward, a brave leapt from cover to get a clear shot at him. Boone snapped off a round, and the warrior fell. At this point, Boone later recounted, he experienced a surge of confidence. The feeling was only momentary. Just then Hugh McGary galloped up, having been left miraculously untouched by the volleys that had cut down the van. He brought a stunning report: The columns under Todd and Trigg had been routed. They were racing back toward the ford and their horses.

Boone looked back and saw that warriors had moved into the militiamen's rear to seize the mounts and cut off escape. They already lined the riverbank. In a frantic effort to break through to safety, the thinned units of Trigg and Todd crashed into them. As he watched the melee—a desperate contest between tomahawk-wielding Indians and militiamen swinging clubbed rifles—Boone realized that the battle was hopelessly lost. Forty men were already down, and more were falling.

Without the initiative of militiaman Benjamin Netherland, still more Long Knives would have died. Even in defeat, Netherland stood his ground. After fighting through the braves and crossing the Licking River, he could have continued his flight. Instead, he organized a dozen or so riflemen who had likewise reached the south bank. Their determined defense felled enough warriors to break up the huggermugger on the opposite shore and enable some of their companions to cross to safety.

Netherland's timely show of fortitude mitigated the disaster, but at that juncture nothing could have reversed it. By now, warriors were heavily pressing Boone's own column, and men all around him were beginning to fall. The prudent thing was to get them out of harm's way. He sent them into dense woods to the left, with orders

to recross the Licking downstream, beyond range of the warriors' muskets. To cover their escape, Boone stayed behind, with Israel beside him. Daniel ordered his son to run for it, but out of love, Israel disobeyed. "Father, I won't leave you," he insisted. A moment later, a musket ball caught him in the neck. He groaned and fell, then started convulsing, blood gushing from his mouth. Daniel stooped over him and watched the light fade from his eyes. He must have recalled that his son was at the Blue Licks only at his insistence. Later, Boone would call Israel's death the hardest blow he ever felt.

Too busy for remorse, Daniel Boone followed his unit leftward into the woods and cautiously made his way back to the river. Once safely



The moment Major Hugh McGary and a score of Harrodsburg men in the van reached the crest of the hill beyond the ford, the Indians sprang their trap. From then on the battle turned into a brutal melee between tomahawk-wielding warriors and militiamen swinging clubbed rifles.

across, he rejoined his men—what was left of them. As it happened, the Indians, after scalping the dead (together with the wounded and prisoners, whom they then finished off by slow degrees), grew sated with blood and triumph, and made no effort to run down the survivors. All the same, the surviving officers led a helter-skelter retreat back south. On the march they met Logan's force advancing toward them and reported their bad news. Logan pushed on as far as the Licking River. By now the Indians had cleared out, and his pursuit fizzled there. He feared a second ambush at the Blue Licks.

Among the Long Knives who reached home was young Squire Boone, son of Daniel's brother Samuel. Squire, who had been shot in the hip and would be permanently lame, was luckier than his brother Thomas, who lay dead at the Blue Licks. Among the other

HORT ON DISCIPLINE AND COOL JUDGMENT.



Boone later recounted that as a brave leapt from cover, he snapped off a round, killing the Indian and giving himself a momentary surge of confidence. But upon learning that the columns under Colonels John Todd and Stephen Trigg had been routed, he knew the battle was lost.

dead were Colonels Todd and Trigg, together with 14 fellow officers. Death might have redeemed, or partly redeemed, Major McGary. But he came out of the Blue Licks unscathed and unchastened and would live to perpetrate still more mischief. Although a mighty Indian fighter, he was the bane of the Long Knives. Chiefly through his rash attempt to counter earlier charges of timidity, 77 men had died at the Blue Licks. In all, August 19, 1782, was the bloodiest day the militiamen ever endured. Indian casualties, on the other hand, were light.

Through a long war punctuated with grim sieges and lightning punitive expeditions, the Long Knives were sustained by their courage, audacity and individual initiative. They also had plenty of faults, including vainglory, rashness and impatience with prudent restraint. As an early historian put it, they were "fool-brave." At the Blue Licks the fool in them clearly got the upper hand and led them into folly.

For the tiny communities represented in the expedition, the loss of 77 men was a calamity. At the stations and in remote, scattered

cabins there was bitter grief. Five days after the disaster Boone returned with a burial party. The group chased off glutting buzzards and interred the torn, scalped, bloated, blackened, stinking bodies in a mass grave. A monument was later erected to commemorate those who died.

Of all the places that figured in Boone's lifelong wanderings, the Blue Licks was surely filled with the most poignant memories. In peaceful times, he had often hunted there. In 1774, during an interlude on his perilous mission to warn the Kentucky surveyors of the onset of Lord Dunmore's war with the Shawnees, it was at the Licks that Boone had laughed at the antics of his fellow ranger Michael Stoner as Stoner tried to evade an enraged buffalo. Two years later, Boone had returned to the Blue Licks as a rescuer and had taken his daughter Jemima and the Callaway sisters from their Indian captors.

After that, it must surely have seemed to Boone that the Blue Licks had turned against him. In early 1778, the Licks witnessed his capture by the Shawnees, together with the capture of 26 fellow Long Knives. After his escape, while Boone and his brother Edward were returning from a hunt there in October 1780, Indians killed Edward. Now the site would forever hold Israel and Thomas Boone.

For Boone and the new Kentuckians fighting to hold onto their settlements, the Blue Licks had become a place of abiding painful and dark memories. During the 38 years that remained to him, mention of the fight at Blue Licks brought tears to Daniel Boone's eyes.

As for Simon Girty, he alone of the Girty brothers eventually returned to civilized life, though he remained infamous. Like Boone, he has lent his name to numerous

locations around the region, mostly for some form of treachery or violence. Near the Ohio River at Short Creek, there is a ridge known as Girty's Point, from which he often launched scalping raids. The path there, first traveled by Indians centuries ago, is still used by the locals, most of whom are unaware they tread in the footsteps of villains and patriots, players in the saga of dark and bloody ground that was once Kentucky. □

James Graves writes from Ipswich, Mass. For further reading, he recommends: *Daniel Boone: The Life and Legend of an American Pioneer*, by John Mack Faragher; and *The Long Hunter: A New Life of Daniel Boone*, by Lawrence Elliot.

To learn more about Daniel Boone and the Battle of the Blue Licks, read *The Life of Daniel Boone*, by Lyman Copeland Draper, available at www.TheHistoryNetShop.com
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THE MEMORY OF BLUE LICKS OFTEN BROUGHT TEARS TO BOONE'S EYES.

'MURDER' AT MALVERN



As depicted in Don Stivers' painting *Malvern Hill*, Confederate troops advanced toward massed Federal artillery with little support of their own (Don Stivers). **Opposite above:** Major General Daniel Harvey Hill's division was fed piecemeal to the slaughter (National Archives).

Malvern Hill



The heavy Confederate casualties and defeat at Malvern Hill were part of the bloody building process of the Army of Northern Virginia.

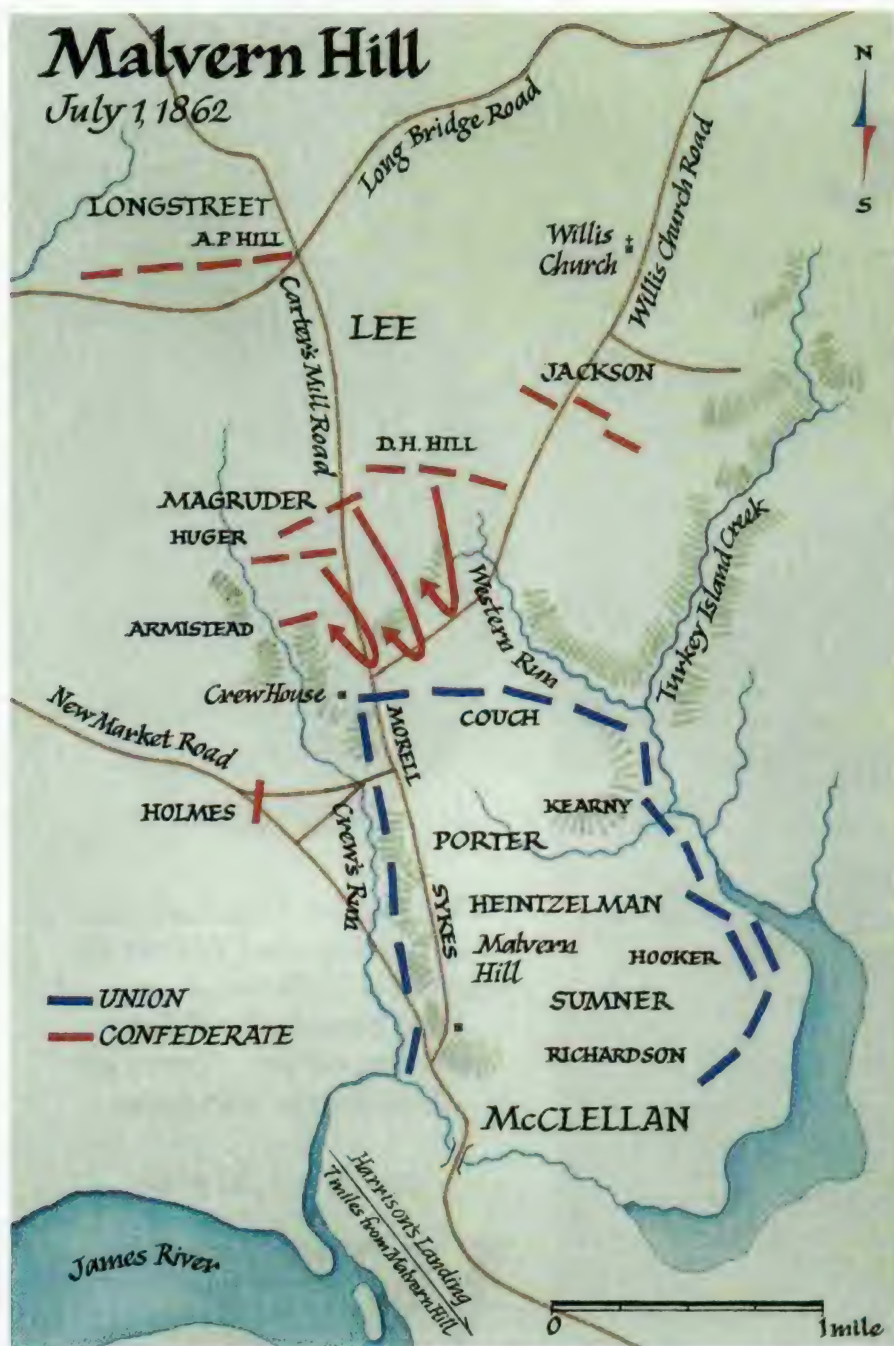
By Drew J. Kendall

WRITING SOME 30 years after the Civil War for *The Century* magazine, retired Lieutenant General Daniel Harvey (D.H.) Hill could not forgive the flood of mistakes that had led to the butchering of his division on July 1, 1862, at Malvern Hill, Virginia. He could still see the long line of brave soldiers clad in gray, marching up the slopes into the massed Federal artillery, until at last, wreathed in sulfurous smoke, his brigades were blown to bits. Still bitter after many years about an attack that never had to happen, he was compelled to write, "It was not war—it was murder!"

In June 1862, D.H. Hill was a major general with the newly designated Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. Although a peevish man, Hill's recklessly brave behavior earned the respect and admiration of his troops. He was also an individualist whose outspoken opinions of

Malvern Hill

July 1, 1862



up the Peninsula between the James and York rivers. The Union force was indeed impressive, consisting of five corps, cavalry and artillery—more than 100,000 men, all told. It was, in fact, the largest force ever directed against Richmond during the war. To face that menace, the Confederates could initially muster only 60,000 men. The situation for the South was truly grim except in one respect: Major General George B. McClellan commanded the Army of the Potomac.

MCCLELLAN PROVED TO BE the South's salvation during the aptly named Peninsula campaign. Woefully undermanned and unprepared, the Confederate forces were initially in no position to take on McClellan's masses. It did not really matter, because McClellan was not prepared to engage them. Born of an old and noted family, he had distinguished himself in the Mexican War, graduated second in his West Point class and achieved the presidency of a railroad before the war. When fighting broke out in 1861, he led an army to several small successes in what is now West Virginia and so embellished the reports that President Abraham Lincoln offered him command of the Army of the Potomac. For all his promise, however, McClellan was a man tortured by fear of the enemy. And grossly exaggerated reports by his intelligence service convinced him that he faced a force of 120,000 men. Constantly in turmoil because of those perceived odds, he moved ponderously up the Peninsula, giving the Rebels time to consolidate their forces. In spite of his tactical shortcomings, though, McClellan was an excellent organizer who adored his men, and his men adored him.

As of May 31, 1862, McClellan was so close to Richmond that the spires of the town were visible and the pealing of church bells audible. For the Confederate army, at that time commanded by General Joseph E. Johnston, the time to strike had come. That strike, which involved the indecisive

The Battle of Malvern Hill was the bloody anticlimax to General Robert E. Lee's Seven Days' campaign, which dramatically threw back the Union Army from the gates of Richmond.

his fellow officers often led to infighting, an attribute that followed him to the grave. Curiously, though, his personality fit right in with the individualistic leadership in the Army of Northern Virginia. When it was organized on June 1, 1862, this soon to be feared force was a group of various commands and divisions still seeking an identity under the direction of the recently appointed General Robert E. Lee. Far from being idolized by his troops at that point in the war, "Granny" Lee was best known for a failed campaign in western Virginia in the fall of 1861 when he took command. He was also in the early stages of getting to know his generals.

Lee's promotion came at a particularly desperate time for the Confederacy. In May 1862, the huge Union Army of the Potomac was approaching the Rebel capital, Richmond, Va., by a relatively unexpected route—

Battle of Fair Oaks (or Seven Pines), resulted in a serious wound to Johnston and the appointment of Maj. Gen. Gustavus W. Smith in his place—and, when Smith proved to be unsuited to the task, Lee. What followed was one of history's amazing recoveries. Taking the initiative, Lee launched a series of attacks that led to a string of severe battles known as the Seven Days' campaign. McClellan, convinced that his army was about to be destroyed, fell back from the gates of Richmond 20 miles toward the James River, to a little-known rise called Malvern Hill.

As the morning of July 1, 1862, drew nigh, Lee's army faced a beaten enemy. In his haste to escape, McClellan had been conducting a hurried, albeit orderly, retreat to Harrison's Landing on the James River, a site where his heavily armed gunboats could cover his

troops and from which his army could disembark and retreat to Washington. Overcome by the previous week's fighting, McClellan was exhausted and depressed. He wrote his wife, "The whole army is here—worn out & war worn—after a week of daily battles." To Washington he sent a typically anxious dispatch: "We are hard pressed by superior numbers.... You must send us very large reinforcements... and they must come very promptly." President Lincoln, tiring of his repeated messages of impending doom, considered this latest "simply absurd" and reminded McClellan to "not ask impossibilities of me."

In order to cover his wagon train's retreat to Harrison's Landing, McClellan had positioned his army atop Malvern Hill. Rising some 130 feet above the James River, the prominence resembled a plateau more than a hill, and it offered an excellent site to defend. Bordered on both sides by two small, marshy streams called Western Run and Turkey Run, the hill could only be attacked from the north. The Willis Church Road divided the hill fairly evenly down the middle. On the west side of the road, the landscape was rolling, with small bluffs; the east side sloped gently for 60 feet down to the woods, offering no cover or concealment.

MCCLELLAN'S MOST trusted subordinate at the scene was Brig. Gen. Fitz John Porter. A very talented officer, Porter positioned 17,800 men of the divisions of Brig. Gens. George W. Morell and Darius N. Couch to guard the bluffs, and massed Colonel Henry J. Hunt's artillery to cover virtually all approaches. Most of Hunt's artillery consisted of rifled guns of greater accuracy and effect than anything the Rebels had. Furthermore, Porter had massive siege artillery on hand a mile behind the lines—guns capable of hurling immense shells into an attacker's ranks. There were, altogether, nearly 250 guns on the hill. The whole position was formidable but not necessarily impregnable. If an attacker threw everything he had into a coordinated assault, the line might be overwhelmed.

Below Malvern Hill, as the Confederate army drew up in the surrounding woods, Lee consulted with two of his generals, D.H. Hill and Maj. Gen. James Longstreet. For the past week Lee had been striking at the Union army's detached corps and divisions, trying to deliver a blow that would bag the whole force. Now it seemed McClellan was going to get away. Hill was aware of the strength of this hilltop Union position and told Lee, "If General McClellan is there in force, we had better let him alone." Longstreet was of a different opinion and guffawed, "Don't get scared, now that we have got him licked!"

There did seem to be a general consensus in the Army of Northern Virginia that they had the Army of the Potomac on the run. Lee decided to at least reconnoiter the site, so he sent Longstreet to observe the Federal left while he rode off to scout the right. Longstreet, whose forces, along with those of A.P. Hill, were held in reserve, later wrote, "An elevated point

was found off the enemy's left front, as high as the plateau upon which his army stood, from which a fair view was had of his position." If some batteries could be hauled up the rise, Longstreet reasoned, maybe a like number of guns could be placed on the Federal right, then "under the cross-fire of the Confederates... [the enemy] could be thrown into disorder, and thus make way for combined assaults of the infantry." Lee was equally optimistic and made plans for a general assault. But then an amazing series of complications beset the Army of Northern Virginia.

The impending failure of Lee's assault plan can be traced to three problems of considerable import. First, oddly enough, his army possessed no accurate maps of the Richmond vicinity. Part of Lee's plan was to involve the division of Maj. Gen. John B. Magruder, nicknamed "Prince John" because of his cavalier attitude. Lee wanted Magruder's division included in the assault, but because of some confusion among his guides, Magruder's men were marching away from the



PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE CIVIL WAR

action, not toward it, hopelessly lost and temporarily unavailable. The second difficulty involved a serious communication problem in Lee's orders. Once he decided an assault was plausible, his chief of staff wrote orders to the participating commanders: "Batteries have been established to act upon the enemy's line. If it is broken as is probable, [Brig. Gen. Lewis] Armistead, who can witness effect of the fire, has been ordered to charge with a yell. Do the same." By this one vague command, the entire plan of attack was placed into the sole hands of a brigadier general, and the attack signal for an entire battle front was based on whether the other units would hear Armistead's men yell. Any chance for a coordinated attack was, by that directive, lost. The third wrench in Lee's plan involved the artillery's role in the fight. Longstreet had envi-

Major General George B. McClellan (center) was photographed in 1861 at the headquarters of Brig. Gen. George Webb Morell (far left), whose massed batteries were so effective at Malvern Hill.



McClellan's most trusted subordinate at Malvern Hill was Brig. Gen. Fitz John Porter, who at one point personally led Union reinforcements to his pressured line (National Archives).

sioned two great batteries of perhaps 50 guns each, bombarding the Federal line from two positions to soften the defenses before the Confederate assault. For some reason, the Confederate reserve artillery never received orders to bring up the guns. Consequently, a paltry 16 guns opened up the bombardment against the massed Union artillery.

The 16 Confederate artillery pieces positioned on the bluff opposite the Union left commenced the bombardment at 1:30 that afternoon. The other battery did not open fire at all. There was no cross-fire. Union artillery crews had merely to bring their pieces to bear on each Rebel fieldpiece one at a time. Confederate Captain John Lamb remembered, "Only a battery or two could get into position at the time, and as soon as exposed on the edge of the field fifty pieces turned on them and they were crushed at once." When the other battery finally did commence firing, it consisted of only a few guns, and they were immediately pounded into submission. Longstreet, who remembered the bombardment as "feeble at best," sensed the futility of it and wrote, "A little after 3 P.M. I understood that we would not be able to attack the enemy that day, inasmuch as his position was too strong to admit of it."

Lee appeared to concur with Longstreet's opinion, but he still had his eye on the Federal right and was inclined to mobilize his forces in that direction, except that it was getting late in the day. He seemed resigned to put off the attack until July 2, but wrote no orders to his subordinates indicating such an opinion.

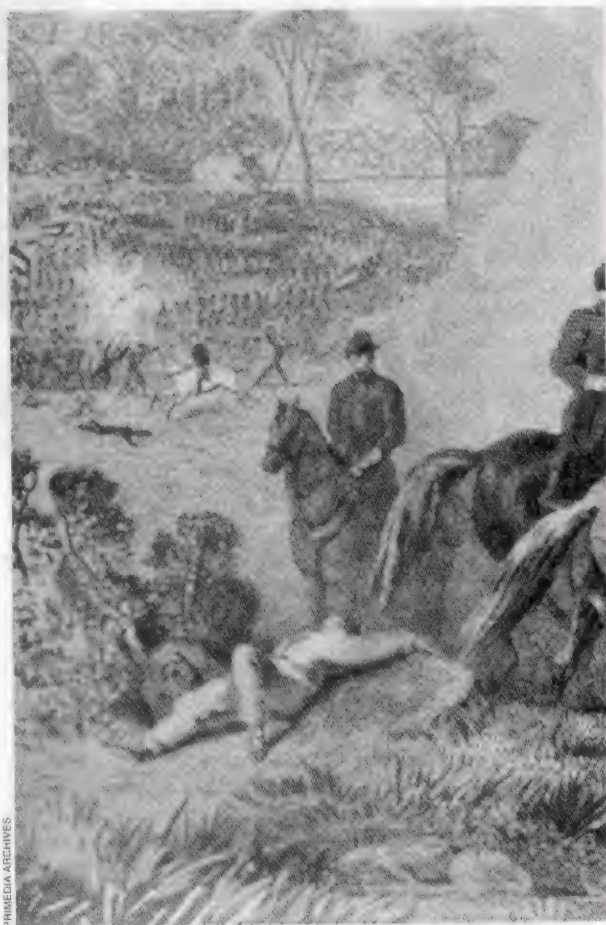
IN THE MEANTIME, FROM THEIR unstable position close to General Morell's Union lines, Armistead's brigade was growing impatient. Union skirmishers had taken note of the Confederate position and were darting in and out from behind harvested wheat shocks, picking off Rebel infantry and making life generally uncomfortable. In response, Armistead sent a few regiments up the slope to clear them out. The sharpshooters merely ran back up the slope to the protection of the main force. Armistead's men, no doubt excited at finally doing some shooting back, chased them up virtually to the crest of the hill and the main Federal line. When the Confederates realized the strength of the Union position, their charge came to a sudden halt, with Armistead's men crouching down under the protection of a bluff, unable to advance or retreat under a hail of enemy fire. Naturally, all that activity caused a great deal of yelling and shooting.

In the woods below Malvern Hill, Magruder had been located and returned ahead of his command, which was still struggling through the back roads, trying to make its way to the front. The first correspondence he received was Lee's original order for a full attack, dependent on Armistead's brigade advancing with a yell.

Since there was a great deal of commotion in that vicinity, Magruder dispatched a message to Lee advising him of Armistead's "success." To Lee, that order, combined with another message he had received advising him of Federal troop movement on the crest, was all he needed to hear. Actually, the movement reported to him was the Federals readjusting their lines, but Lee seemed committed to destroying McClellan. His spoken orders to Magruder were to "press forward your whole line and follow up Armistead's success." No official written dispatch was delivered to his commanders, and Magruder acted on the note his assistant had written of what he heard Lee say.

Atop Malvern Hill, General Fitz John Porter remembered the "ominous silence" before the attack. All day long he had been anticipating the possibility of yet another Rebel attack. For the past week the enemy had struck repeatedly at the Army of the Potomac on a daily basis. There seemed no reason why the Rebels would not also strike today.

Magruder began the assault with two brigades commanded by Brig. Gens. William Mahone and Ambrose Wright and added them to Armistead's force on the hill, about 5,000 men in all. Their objective was a farmhouse owned by the Crew family and the massed batteries of Morell's division. The whole assault was an uncoordinated mess and a microcosm of the entire day's action. Confederate attacking forces were unable to maintain cohesion, and as Porter wrote, "the artillery of both Morell and Couch mowed them down with shrapnel, grape, and canister." Upon nearing the crest



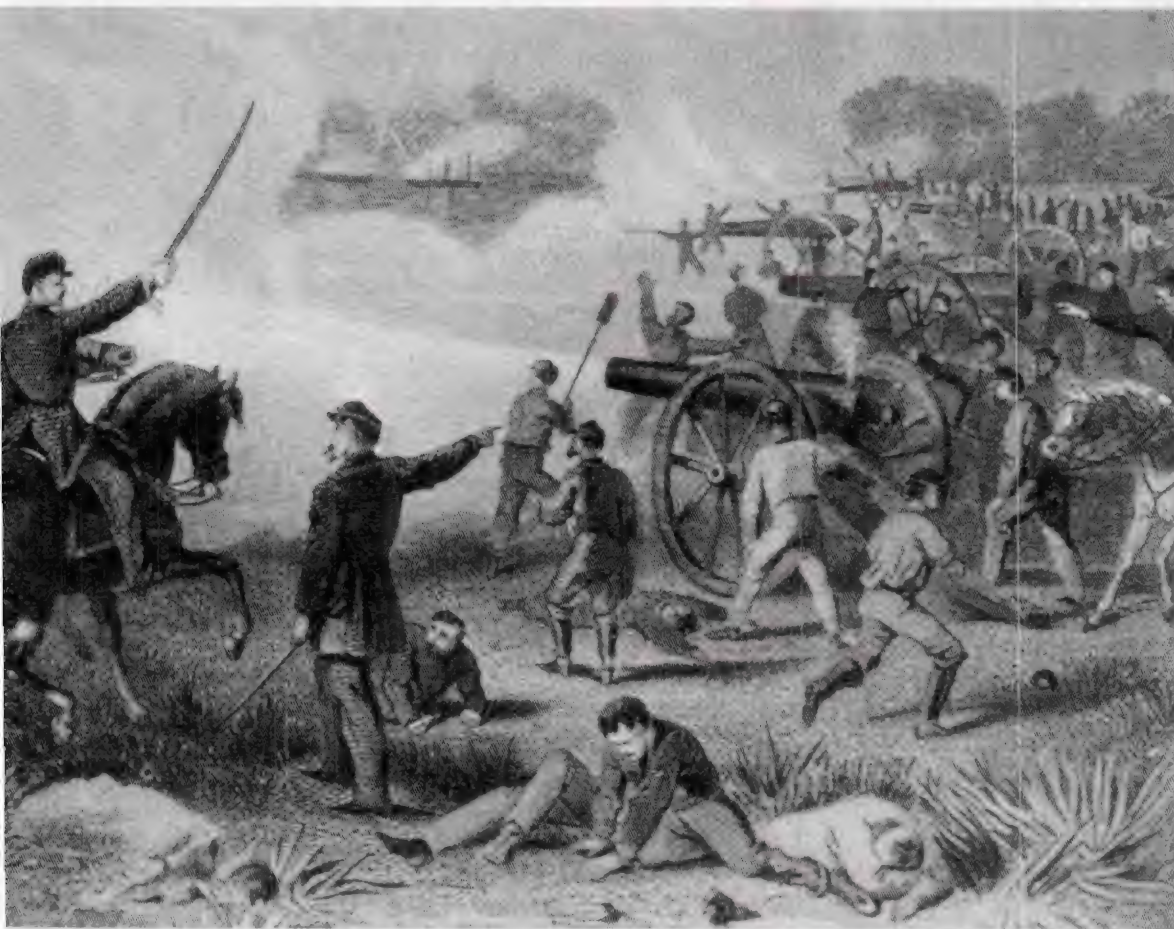
PRIMEIRA ARCHIVES

of the hill, the Rebels crouched down under a bluff, much as Armistead's men had done, and shot wildly back and forth across the newly created no man's land. Captain Thomas Livermore of the 1st New Hampshire Infantry remembered how "cannon and muskets roared and rattled, the blue smoke made the air heavy, and cheers and yells made the heavens ring." The strength of the Union artillery was clear on this day. "The havoc made by the rapidly bursting shells from guns arranged so as to sweep any position far and near, and in any direction, was fearful to behold," noted Porter. As a Georgian named David Winn later remembered, "It is astonishing that every man did not fall."

OFF TO THE NORTH, D.H. HILL heard the sounds of battle and made a decision to commit the five brigades of his entire division, more than 8,000 men. Hill's men faced the long, gradual slope on the other side of the Willis Church Road, where Couch's division waited in strength and Stonewall Jackson's forces stood in reserve. If Magruder's assault was pointless, Hill's was hopeless. Nevertheless, Lee's orders had seemed explicit enough. As he later reported, "While conversing with my brigade commanders shouting was heard on our right, followed by the roar of musketry. We all agreed that this was the signal agreed upon, and I ordered my division to advance."

As his brigades moved into position, Hill became immediately aware of the ominous position into which he was putting his men. Many years later, he remembered the "woods around us being filled with shriek-

ing and exploding shells. I noticed an artilleryman seated comfortably behind a very large tree. A moment later a shell passed through the huge tree and took off the man's head." Unfortunately for the Confederate effort, Hill fed his brigades in piecemeal. No overwhelming assault was organized, and the result was a slaughter. As one regiment after another was literally blasted away by the intense Union fire, another would take its place. There was no place to hide on the long slope, and gray-clad bodies, torn to pieces by blasts of canister, littered the hillside. Lieutenant George Hagar of the 10th Massachusetts wrote, "We murdered them by the hundreds but they again formed & came up to be slaughtered." The 3rd Alabama recorded a loss of 56 percent of its effectives that day. And still they came. "As each brigade emerged from the woods, from fifty to one hundred guns opened on it, tearing great gaps in its ranks," Hill remorsed. Some of his men actually closed to within 200 yards of the Union lines, and their fire began to tell on Union gunners. "Truly the courage of the soldiers was sublime!" recalled Hill



Above: A yell from Lewis Armistead's troops was intended to signal the rest of the Confederate forces to advance (National Archives).

Left: Civil War engravings were often based more on fantasy than fact. This one inaccurately shows Federal artillery firing toward the James River from nearly level ground.

Lee's disjointed assaults at Malvern Hill did not gain an inch of ground. Yet McClellan, as pictured here, chose to withdraw to the safety of the James River and the protection of his gunboats.



HARPER'S HISTORY OF THE GREAT REBELLION

years later, still seething over the uncoordinated nature of the attacks. "Battery after battery was in their hands for a few moments, only to be wrested away by fresh troops of the enemy. If one division could effect this much, what might have been done had the other nine cooperated with it!"

OFF TO THE CONFEDERATE right, Magruder was calling on Lee for help with his stalled attack. Lee released the brigade of Brig. Gen. Robert Ransom to assist him. Magruder's lost brigades were also beginning to show up on the field, and he decided to throw them into the fray as well. It was more of the same—piece-meal attacks blown to bits at close range. Nevertheless, the assaults were unrelenting and suspenseful. At one point Union General Porter himself was forced to lead reinforcements in to his pressured line. A Rebel bullet brought down his horse, sending the general tumbling. Fearful that he would be captured, he destroyed all his campaign notes. The Confederates were driven off, leaving Porter to forever regret "destroying interesting and valuable memoranda of our campaign."

For the Rebels on the hill, the butchery continued. "The incessant roar of musketry, and the terrific cannonading presented a scene of awful sublimity," Captain Lamb of Magruder's command reminisced. "Whistling bullets and bursting shells, falling trees, clouds of smoke, lifting for a moment, and then a sheet of fire along the line from 20,000 guns on either side...."

As daylight turned to darkness, the futility of the Confederate assaults grew apparent. The sounds of battle died away, to be replaced by the much more terrible sound of a battlefield choked with dead and dying men. Lee's army, wrapped in confusion and misunderstanding the entire day, had sacrificed 5,650 men, the bulk of whom were contorted in agony on the long slopes of Malvern Hill. Colonel William Averell of the Union cavalry remembered the scene he beheld the following morning: "A third of them were dead or dying, but enough were alive and moving to give the field a singular crawling effect."

"The battle of Malvern Hill was a disaster to the Confederates," General Hill wrote. But Lee's setback did not matter, for McClellan was already a beaten man. He had only lost 3,000 men in the battle, but McClellan, who had been mostly absent during the fight to leave General Porter to direct affairs, had one plan in his mind—escape Lee to reorganize and refit. During the night of July 1, he pulled his army out of its Malvern Hill defenses and retired to Harrison's Landing, leaving Lee in control of the field. On the 2nd, McClellan wired Lincoln, "As usual, we had a severe battle yesterday and beat the enemy badly." But in typical McClellan style, he finished with, "Every 1,000 men you send at once will help me much."

It rained during the following day, washing away the blood from the wheat fields and marshy bottomland around Malvern Hill. The Seven Days' campaign had ended with a tactical victory for the Union, but strategically it was a triumph for General Lee. Aside from the many misgivings of a poorly organized army with too many leaders, by taking the initiative in the campaign Lee had wired in on McClellan's fears and turned them against him to save Richmond. Subsequently Lee would reorganize his force into three corps with familiar, dependable leaders at the helm and turn the Army of Northern Virginia into a legendary force. Malvern Hill was a bloody byproduct of that building process. □

Learn more today!

For more on the Battle of Malvern Hill, read *The Richmond Campaign of 1862: The Peninsula and Seven Days*, by Gary W.

Gallagher, available from www.TheHistoryNetShop.com
Part of the **About** Network

Drew Kendall writes from Cincinnati, Ohio. For further reading, he recommends *To the Gates of Richmond*, by Stephen Sears.

For more about the development of the armies of the American Civil War, go to militaryhistory.about.com/features.

GERMAN SCHOOLBOY FLAK GUNNER

By John Pursley

At the beginning of World War II, the thought of schoolboys manning a German anti-aircraft battery would have been inconceivable. By early 1942, however, Germany was experiencing tremendous manpower shortages. Casualties suffered since 1939 had rapidly gobbled up most of a generation and the Nazis began conscripting younger and younger men in order to fill the vacancies in the ranks.

The recollections of these former child soldiers provides an opportunity to examine the war from another perspective. Their accounts often differ widely from those of what many have come to accept as the typical German fighting man.

Despite the passage of years, the memories of those long ago days linger. Remembrances of battle, compounded with years of internment in postwar prison camps, are still a vivid

reality in the mind of Lothar Seifert, one of the young conscripts. Only recently has he chosen to share his thoughts and recollections. John Pursley interviewed him for *Military History*.

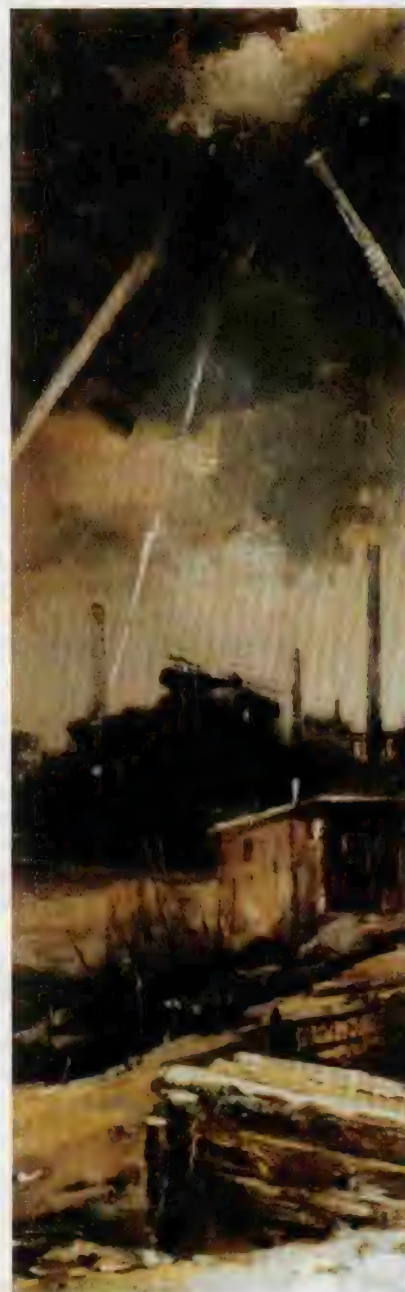
Military History: How old were you when you were conscripted into the German military?

Seifert: I had recently turned 15 when I entered the service. I was attending high school in Berlin one day as I usually did, when a group of soldiers came into my classroom. The officer in charge ordered all of us students to stand and face him. As I watched him move

A FORMER GERMAN POW
CLAIMS THAT NEARLY A
MILLION GERMAN SOLDIERS
DIED IN ALLIED CAMPS.



By the end of the war, the Luftwaffe flak badge, which was awarded to members of German gun crews after they shot down their fifth plane, was one of the few decorations that had not become meaningless.



across the front of the room, I wondered if he had come to tell stories of our victorious army. My curiosity, however, was short lived. The officer suddenly stopped, and in a loud, authoritative voice, bluntly stated we were being conscripted into military service. I had heard about press gangs being used to fill the ranks of the British navy during the last few centuries, but I never really thought it would become a practice in Germany, let alone happen to me. I accepted my fate knowing it would be futile, if not fatal, to resist. I barely had time to say goodbye to my family before they took me to the local military headquarters.

MH: What happened then?

Seifert: After a few days of orientation where we were issued uniforms and given a basic overview of military life, we were distributed among various groups of soldiers stationed throughout the areas surrounding Berlin. Being under 18 years of age, most of us quickly discov-

ered that we fell into the gray area between civilian and soldier. Although we were officially designated members of the Hitler Youth, we were assigned to perform military duties similar to those of the older men. We were issued regulation *Luftwaffe* uniforms, but were told we would have to wear the armband of the Hitler Youth in order to distinguish us from the Regular personnel. I can still remember feeling especially resentful of that order. To me, wearing that particular armband was an insult, and I hated even the thought of someone seeing me in it.

MH: What was it about wearing the armband that you did not like?

Seifert: Quite simply, we considered it to be a mark that implied we were children and not soldiers. The directive made us very angry because we felt that if we were expected to fight as soldiers and act like men, we shouldn't have to look like a bunch of Boy Scouts



German anti-aircraft battery commanders soon learned that schoolboys such as Lothar Seifert did not have the upper body strength required to load the 88mm Flugabwehr Kanone (anti-aircraft), or flak guns (left), because of the steep angle at which the barrel was often used.

OPPOSITE: COURTESY OF JOHN PURSLEY; LEFT: U.S. ARMY MILITARY HISTORY CENTER



Although the primary task of Nazi artists was visual propaganda, Willfried Nagel's *The Air Raid* was a relatively accurate painting of wartime realities created by Allied bombing raids in 1943.

parading around in some silly looking armband. Another reason for our negative attitude was that among my friends, the Hitler Youth movement was sort of a joke. You know, something reserved for fanatical people who wanted their children to look and play like little soldiers. It was really an insult to be associated with that movement, so we simply refused to wear them.

MH: What sort of duties were you assigned?

Seifert: I suppose you could say that my primary duty was to help shoot down enemy planes before they had the chance to bomb Berlin. At first they tried to make me the loader on an 88mm flak gun, but I didn't last too long on that job. Our leaders quickly figured out that boys

a lot of action?

Seifert: At first we would be called five or six times a week for some fairly heavy action. But as the war progressed and our ability to stop the air raids was neutralized, the planes appeared with progressively increasing frequency. By the middle of 1943, when the Americans came by day and the British bombed by night, it seemed as if we were manning our guns most of the time. But you know, it really wasn't such a bad situation for me personally. I was very young, still immortal in my own mind, and really didn't think about dying or the fact I was helping to kill people I didn't know. Truthfully, I used to have a lot of fun firing the cannon at airplanes and watching the flak explode. It was very exciting and dangerous to be involved in that sort of action.

MH: Were you ever decorated?

Seifert: I was awarded the *Luftwaffe* flak badge about six months into my service. This type of badge was given to each member of the gun crew after we had shot down our fifth plane.

MH: Is that your only decoration?

Seifert: The only one I really feel I genuinely earned. I say that because I had many opportunities to be awarded the Iron Cross, but toward the end of the war, they didn't mean too much. It was about as symbolic as finding the prize in a box of cereal. Have you ever seen the movie footage of Adolf Hitler standing outside of his bunker giving young boys medals? This sort of situation became commonplace, and I can distinctly remember officers running around with boxes of Iron

'I WAS VERY YOUNG, STILL IMMORTAL IN MY OWN MIND, AND REALLY DIDN'T THINK ABOUT DYING...OR HELPING TO KILL....'

my age didn't have the upper body strength required to hold the charge in place while closing the breach. This would have been a different case if the barrel were not required to be kept at such a steep angle in order to facilitate the cannon's role as an anti-aircraft weapon. Soon after they figured out we weren't strong enough, I was transferred to one of the 105mms. These guns were a lot easier for boys my age to operate because they were equipped with an automatic loading device.

MH: Being stationed in Berlin, were you involved in

Crosses giving them out as one gives out candy on Halloween. All of the awards lost much of their prestige and were reduced to little more than a ploy to build morale. On occasion, the idea would work, but it was a shame because there were many men who were genuinely deserving of the recognition the Iron Cross should have brought to them and their families.

MH: With all of the action going on, were you on duty most of the time?

Seifert: We had some periods of time off, but I used to hate being caught on furlough during an enemy attack. Not only did that mean I would miss the action, but we weren't as safe in town as in the field, where our gun was. Very rarely was one of our anti-aircraft batteries hit by the falling bombs. In reality, the last place I wanted to be during a bombing raid was in the inferno of a group of burning buildings.

MH: What did you do when there weren't any air raids going on?

Seifert: We had our set routines of general soldier duties and training, but we were also required to complete our schooling. I am still amazed at some of the priorities and organizational skills of the civic leaders. There, in the midst of a world war when Germany faced certain defeat, they were still having school for us. I suppose most of them believed the propaganda being thrown at us regarding our winning the war, so it was pretty much business as usual. As far as living conditions went, the barracks we occupied was our home, schoolroom and place for entertainment. Even though we weren't technically in the service, we were placed under the supervision of sergeants and officers who were older and much more serious about things than we were.

MH: So in essence, you were treated as soldiers?

Seifert: They tried to treat us like that, but we usually didn't let them get away with it or respond very well when they did. It didn't take us long to realize that because we were officially too young to be in the service, we had some control in our situation. We would drive our leaders crazy questioning everything they tried to make us do, and their authority in general. We would always look for the humor in a situation, and that wasn't always necessarily conducive to our relationship with them.

MH: Can you give me an example?

Seifert: I recall one instance when a sergeant tried to make us run several miles in ranks as a punishment for having some local girls visiting in our barracks. We ran all right, but were so slow we could have been going backwards. We knew he really couldn't do much other than yell and threaten us with things we all knew

wouldn't happen. To make the story short, it became dark long before we completed even a portion of the distance. He was so frustrated with us, he just quit trying and dismissed the entire group. We were basically a lot of rowdy boys trying to enjoy ourselves at his expense. Things are a lot different when someone needs you more than you need them.

MH: Many people have the notion that Germans of that time thrived on militarism. It sounds as if that was not always the case.

Seifert: I don't think you should believe the myth that all of the German people thrived on a regimented lifestyle. Speaking for myself and the fellows I served with, we loved to harass our leaders and push every situation to the limit. I remember listening to one boy having a telephone conversation with his father who was in the Gestapo. We heard him say "Heil Hitler" before he hung the receiver

'I SAW HITLER A FEW TIMES BEFORE THE WAR WITH JOSEF GOEBBELS AT HIS SIDE, BUT...I WAS TOO YOUNG TO...CARE....'



COURTESY OF LOTHAR SEIFERT

After turning 16 in 1944, Lothar Seifert (highlighted) reported for Luftwaffe basic training. He was then sent to Denmark, where he claims everything went well until Allied propaganda and small-arms drops "ruined the situation for everyone."

up. We made such fun of him after that, never thinking there could be retribution. I am glad he didn't tell his father.

MH: What about some of the leaders of the country? What did you think of them?

Seifert: I saw Hitler a few times before the war with Josef Goebbels at his side, but I guess I was too young to understand or even care who they were. I was more concerned with enjoying the parades and functions that were going on. As far as some of the other leaders are concerned, I wasn't too impressed by their larger-than-life reputations. Take Hermann Göring for example:

We often referred to him as "Herr Meyer," because that's what he said he would call himself if one enemy bomb ever fell on Germany. His reasoning behind the boast was that because Meyer is a very common [Jewish] name in Germany, he would be lowered in status if we called him that.

MH: Do you have a favorite story from those days?

Seifert: One I can recall involved our *Oberleutnant* [first lieutenant] who received notice he was being promoted to *Hauptmann* [captain]. There is a very old army song that's not really too complimentary, about a *Hauptmann* riding on a billy goat. Being the kind of boys that we were, we decided to help him celebrate his promotion the next day. To prepare, a few of us went out

that night and stole a goat from a local farmer, while some other boys went to the home of one of the girls who used to be sort of a groupie to us. One fellow ended up stealing a corset from the mother who was very large, along with some other items of her undergarments.

The next morning, we dressed the goat in the clothing we had stolen from the woman and left it where the *Hauptmann* would find it. When he saw what we had done, it really made him mad. He knew it was us,

until several years after the war. In my sector, we would watch the "mushrooms" drift towards earth after the airplanes crashed, and would race each other out to meet the men. Sometimes we took the airmen to our barracks and entertained them until our soldiers arrived by playing some of the Louis Armstrong records we had. It was all so impersonal to us. These men were like us, in that they were only doing what they had been told, and not necessarily what they wanted to do. To be quite honest, the worst treatment I ever saw taken against a downed airman was not allowing him to use the latrine because the authorities were afraid to let him out of their sight.

MH: So I take it you didn't really hate your enemies?

Seifert: Goodness no. I don't think most of us actually hated anyone. We didn't like to be bombed, but we understood the reason and accepted the fact. After all, we were shooting back at them. I think all of the soldiers on either side were in the same situation as far as making the best of a bad time.

MH: Were you always stationed in Berlin?

Seifert: No. After I had turned 16, I was conscripted into the "real" armed forces. However, before I could go to basic training, I was forced to spend the mandatory four months of service with the labor corps. That to me was very stupid. Here I was, already trained in the use of artillery and familiar with military ways, but they obviously thought that was a better way of serving my country. So with shovel in hand, I went to the nearest front, which at that time was in Czechoslovakia some-

place. Our main objective was to dig trenches for our troops who were retreating from the Russians. That was not the best duty a person could have. Somehow I survived and in December 1944 reported for *Luftwaffe* basic training.

MH: We have heard that the German armed forces were very strict. Was basic training hard for you?

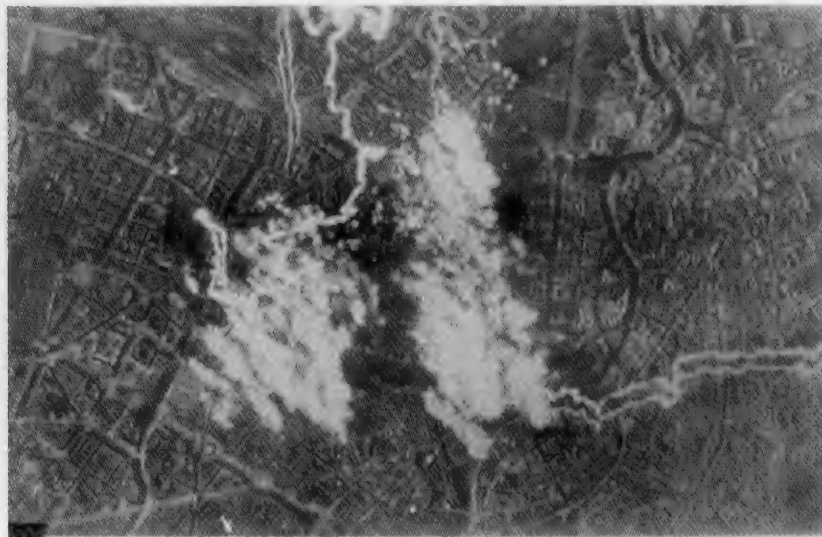
Seifert: You know, that's another myth I need to dispel. Our basic training was tough physically, but we weren't hazed. For example, if I were the drill sergeant and saw a button on your tunic unfastened, I would have to ask your permission before I touched you. They didn't mistreat us like sol-

diers in the United States experience during training. I believe the gentlemanly attitude comes from a history of Prussian aristocracy and respect for individuals.

MH: Where did you go after basic training?

Seifert: They sent me to Denmark, where the people were still friendly toward us. Due to the fact that the country had not been invaded but was only under the protection of the Reich, the problems experienced elsewhere didn't exist. We were able to get along very well with the people until the Allies started dropping weapons and supplies to the resistance. That really

['THE DOWNED AIRMEN] WERE LIKE US, IN THAT THEY WERE ONLY DOING WHAT THEY HAD BEEN TOLD....'



COURTESY OF STEPHEN SWANSON

An aerial photo shows Berlin under attack by bombers of the Eighth Air Force. According to the U.S. Strategic Bombing survey, 1.44 million Allied bombing sorties were flown and 2.7 million tons of bombs were dropped.

but then again, there wasn't a lot he could do. We thought it was very funny at the time, but the joke got better when we found out he had to return all of the items and apologize to the owners on our behalf. I can still picture him totally red-faced with embarrassment, holding up the large pair of underwear in front of the woman and groveling to her. I'm sure if he's still alive, he remembers the incident.

MH: We hear horror stories of downed Allied airmen being killed by civilians. Is there any truth to them?

Seifert: Perhaps it did happen, but I never heard of it

ruined the situation for everyone. As a result of Allied propaganda, the people who found the weapons thought it was their duty to shoot at us even though there were no real cases of civilian mistreatment prior to that time. After the shootings started, the Gestapo would be called in to investigate every situation, which would almost always result in civilian executions and sanctions against them. Those actions just incited more retaliatory attacks against us, which created a spiraling effect. A good situation was ruined and many people needlessly killed because of the Allied intervention. For example, when I first got there, I carried no weapons and could frequent civilian establishments. But after the equipment drops to the underground started, they made us carry Schmeissers everywhere we went, and the cafes and clubs were placed off-limits. Fortunately, I never had to shoot my weapon, and couldn't really tell you how.

MH: So you in essence blame the atrocities carried out by Germans against civilians on the various underground organizations?

Seifert: For the most part, yes. I suppose the underground movements started out in an honorable, patriotic fashion, but some were eventually corrupted by opportunists. At the very least, a lot of the people belonging to the underground were pillagers and extortionists.

MH: How do you mean?

Seifert: I am getting a little ahead of myself, but I learned a lot about the underground after the war. For example, some of the Maquis would blackmail the Vichy French, forcing them to pay extortion money in order to avoid detection. After the Germans left France, the arrangement ended, and so did the lives of the collaborators. I believe many thousands of civilians would have escaped execution if the underground had not provoked retaliation. In reality, the underground organizations were not that effective when compared to the Allied operations as a whole. They were mostly like a fly in the ointment, even though they caused the German war effort some grief. People are always speaking of atrocities, but as far as I am concerned, if you don't want atrocities, don't start a war.

MH: Where did you go after you left Denmark?

Seifert: Half of my unit went to the Eastern Front and the rest of us went back to Berlin to man the AA batteries. There was a lot of confusion back then, and people were transferred all over for no apparent reason. At times you didn't know what unit you were in unless someone told you.

MH: How did the war end for you?

Seifert: We were issued rifles and *Panzerfausts* with orders to fight on "till the death." Some of us went into a small town to set up defensive positions, but were

stopped by a very nervous major who requested us to surrender our weapons to him as the Americans were very near. We realized that was the smart thing to do, so he locked our rifles in a room and we gave ourselves up.

MH: Now the big question: How were you treated?

Seifert: At first, fairly well by the front-line soldiers like ourselves. They gave us cigarettes and chocolate, then told us to walk farther back toward their rear lines because that is where the prisoners were kept. After we arrived in the area, conditions changed drastically. The rear echelon soldiers robbed us of our possessions, decorations and anything else of value they wanted. It seemed that as soon as Germany had given up all of the Allied prisoners of war, the Geneva Convention ceased to exist. With the capitulation of Germany came years of abuse for a large number of former German soldiers. Suddenly, we were no longer prisoners of war, but were classified "disarmed enemy forces," undeserving of treatment given to captured soldiers. We were starved, beaten, murdered and worked to death by our captors. We slept out in the elements with no shelter other than our *Zeltbahn*, if we still had them, and were deprived of the most basic sanitary facilities. We were not allowed

'PEOPLE [SPEAK] OF ATROCITIES, BUT AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, IF YOU DON'T WANT ATROCITIES, DON'T START A WAR.'



In a view from the receiving end of Seifert and his colleagues' efforts, an anti-aircraft shell explodes amid a formation of Boeing B-17G Flying Fortresses as they drop their bombloads over a German city.

any Red Cross visits, medical treatment or even to write our families and let them know we were still alive.

MH: Where were you kept?

Seifert: I was eventually transferred to a compound in France, where the soldiers would just as soon kill us, and they many times did. We were placed on starvation rations and forced to work in slave labor details. Some may say we were getting paid back for the mistreatment of people held in SS concentration camps. However, we were victims of circumstance, prisoners of war, and should have been treated as such.

MH: Are you saying the Allies ran concentration camps after the war?

Seifert: Yes I am. The deaths of perhaps a million German soldiers after the war is an undeniable fact as well as a very well-kept secret. There is a recent book on the subject by James Bacque, entitled *Other Losses*. It had to be published in Canada because it could not be done in the United States. I attribute that to the

interned in the camps. I couldn't understand it then and I still don't understand it now.

MH: Did the conditions ever improve?

Seifert: After a year or so, we began to be hired as laborers by French civilians to perform odd jobs on their farms or whatever. Some of these people were extremely nice and treated us very well. Many of the families would feed us and provide some of the medical care

we so desperately needed. As time passed, the attitudes of the Allies toward us changed and some of the living conditions improved, although they were still far from what I considered to be adequate. The attitude of the average citizen was much superior to that of the military people who were in charge of us. I was once given a German overcoat by a young French woman while working on the streets of Paris. It was freezing cold outside and I was dressed in only a lightweight summer uniform. I really appreciated that.

MH: How long were you a prisoner?

Seifert: Three years, until 1948. Although I probably could have gotten out sooner had I taken up the offer to join the French Foreign Legion. Many of my fellow prisoners joined up just to be able to eat on a regular basis, but by that time I had my fill of regimentation and fighting. Eventually, I was released from the camp system and offered several different jobs locally.

MH: What sort of work did they offer you?

Seifert: I had managed to learn a trade while a prisoner. The French obviously figured that since we were free labor, they would teach us some skills in order to fill their shortages in manpower. After I was freed, I thought I would have a better chance of survival if I remained in France, so I simply slid into the job I was trained for. I stayed in the country and worked until I returned to Germany in 1950. Thirteen years later, I immigrated to the United States.

MH: Looking back, what are your feelings today about your wartime experiences?

Seifert: I am very fortunate to have survived the fighting, but even more so to have lived through my treatment in the camps after the war. I'm

very happy it's all behind me and that I finally have the opportunity to share my story with so many people who may gain an understanding. □

John Pursley is a U.S. Marine Corps veteran who writes from Silverdale, Wash. Lothar Seifert is a retired tile-setter living in Gig Harbor, Wash. For additional reading, the author suggests Other Losses, by James Bacque.



NATIONAL ARCHIVES



COURTESY OF LOTHAR SEIFERT

Top: A postwar National Archives photo bearing the caption: "Some of the POWs at Camp Satory, Versailles, France, are shown in the barracks where they are allowed to relax after 1730 each evening. Many POWs asked to remain in this camp in preference to returning to Germany."

Above: Lothar Seifert (highlighted) as a prisoner of war in France, 1947.

fact that very few people in this country believe the Allies treated prisoners in such a deplorable manner. I'm here to tell you that it happened to many of us.

MH: How did you survive under those conditions?

Seifert: Fortunately, I was young and still in pretty good shape. I can't say the same for many of my fellow prisoners that I watched die from starvation and disease. I even saw boys as young as 12 and old men in their 60s

مکنده مضامیرتی و عقول فتوایان جب فرمان بضبط شمار را سپهسالار
منوس مکتوبس قیام نموده از ان سپهسالار برابر افراشته و عبرت عالمیان باشد



تا ویکر گمتران بامتنه ان پیتیند دلی باکان بوسه دیوسه و در شکر بیکرند پست
نشاید که روباہ شیر کند رعیت بشان دلیری کند نشاید که مردم ننند از خون

Battle of Ankara

COLLISION OF EMPIRES

An empire-building sultan and a rootless conqueror
clashed on the slopes of Catal Tepe in 1402.

By Simon Craig

AS DAWN BROKE ON JULY 28, 1402, TWO great armies faced off before the gates of Ankara for a clash that would echo across Europe and Asia. The day had finally arrived on which the conqueror of Asia would stand toe to toe with the scourge of Christendom. The Turco-Mongol Timur-i-Lenk, better known to Europeans as Tamerlane, had penetrated the domains of the Ottoman Turks, and Sultan Bayazid I, Yilderim ("Lightning"

or "the Thunderbolt") had raised his siege of Constantinople to meet the threat. By the time the sun set, one would be in shackles and the other would bask in the glory of the crowning victory of his long career.

Bayazid is now almost forgotten, but Christopher Marlowe's 1590 play has helped keep the memory of his great antagonist green. Like John Milton's Lucifer in *Paradise Lost*, Marlowe's Tamerlane is both majestic and terrible—"the scourge of God," as the author styled him, borrowing an earlier appellation of Attila the Hun.

In reality Tamerlane certainly would never have said such a thing of himself, but millions of others might. Havoc and slaughter ran like fire through his veins. In the closing decades of the 14th century and into the 15th, he raged across Asia and into Europe from the Great Wall of China to the Mediterranean, from the Ganges to the principality of Moscow. When he captured an enemy city he would raze it, massacring its inhabitants and building pyramids of their severed heads. So complete was his destruction of Delhi at the end of 1398 that it was eclipsed for more than a century.

Tamerlane was born in 1336 in Transoxania—roughly corresponding to present-day Uzbekistan—and by the turn of the 15th century the mere mention of his name elicited horror across the known world. His armies were virtually invincible, and anyone standing against him had to be either very brave or very stupid. Sultan Bayazid was no fool.

Like Tamerlane, Bayazid was a proven general, having demonstrated his skill against the Serbs at the Battle of Kosovo Polje in 1389, when the death by treachery of his own father catapulted him to the pinnacle of the Ottoman Empire. And when victory was

complete, one of Bayazid's first acts was to order the execution of his brother to ensure the stability of his rule. This was a redoubtable figure, and his Islamic empire was large and powerful. It had come into existence at the beginning of the 14th century, and expanded steadily until it posed a serious threat to Christian Europe. The defeat of the Serbs at Kosovo could not be ignored, and a great crusade was launched to meet the challenge. In 1396, the decisive encounter took place on the field of Nicopolis on the Danube. A precipitate charge by the knighthood of Europe swept aside the front ranks of the Turks, only to shatter on the main body of Bayazid's army. Defeat became rout, and the sultan completed his victory with the slaughter of many thousands of prisoners.

It could be argued that Tamerlane was overreaching himself in taking on so powerful a foe. True, his army had an extraordinary record of unbroken success, but now he was challenging a still-expanding empire that already spanned two continents. And he was doing so 2,000 miles from his base at Samarkand. He was taking a huge risk.

But the army that imbued the Asiatic conqueror with such confidence was, like the man himself, nomadic in its essence. Although there were foot soldiers, mounted archers in the old Turco-Mongol tradition were the army's backbone, and foraging for food and grazing in enemy territory was to them a way of life.

Discipline in Tamerlane's army was superb, with ranks that would form without word of command, anticipating orders. The army was also considerably more democratic than the society from which it had sprung. Promotion was by merit, and any soldier who performed an especially brave deed might achieve the status of *tarkhan*, or hero, entitling him to privileges that would remain in his family thereafter. The soldiers were quite a mixed bag, drawn from all quarters of central Asia. Muslims certainly formed the majority, but there were many others, including Christians, Zoroastrians and even shamanists. The religious diversity of his troops, however, would not have greatly concerned their general. Tamerlane himself was only nominally a Muslim, and in truth worshiped no other god but Mars.

An illustration from a Persian literary text depicts Timur-i-Lenk (known to Europeans as Tamerlane) dealing with the newly conquered city of Baghdad in typical fashion—building a pyramid of skulls from its slain inhabitants.

از عساکر فیروزی آثار که بکاشی در عقب کرجنگان فرست بودند سلطان محمود خان
به ایله رم با نرید پسید و او را دتیکه کرده و دست بسته بدرگاه عالم نپاه آورد



عرق مکارم پادشاهانه در حرکت آمد و امر فرمود که او را دست کشاده بجزمت
آورند و چون بعبست قفاقی استعدا یافت مورد او را به اعس از واکرام تلفیق

Another Persian illustration depicts the splendor of Tamerlane's tent court. Although he enriched his capital of Samarkand with the plunder of his conquests, Tamerlane lived for war, caring little for administration. His principal legacy was destruction and death.

The Ottomans, by contrast, took their religion very seriously, yet a large part of Bayazid's force at Ankara was Christian, drawn from conquered lands in Europe. Most famous were the elite janissary infantry. Taken from their families at an early age, the janissaries were educated in war and in Islam; their single mission in life would be to fight for their faith.

The quasi-feudal *sipahi* cavalry, recruited from the provinces of the empire, ensured that the Ottoman army was not short of mounted men. But infantry, making up at least a third of the empire's army, was far more significant for Bayazid than for Tamerlane. Like Tamerlane, however, the sultan led a force disciplined to a degree that astonished European observers.

Disputed regions on the somewhat amorphous border between the two empires made it impossible for them to ignore each other, and in September 1399 Tamerlane led his army out of his capital of Samarkand on the long campaign.

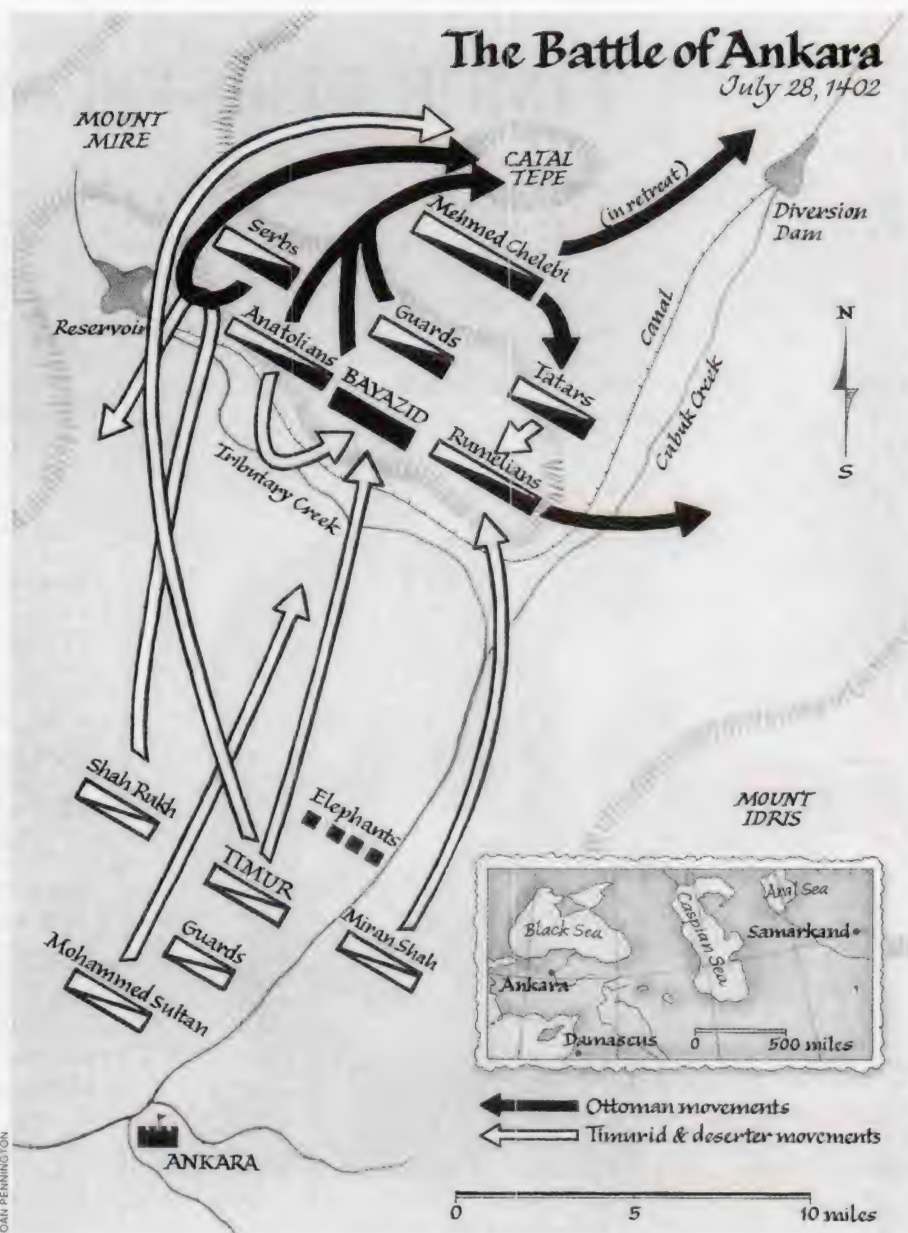
His first move was west and north into Christian Georgia, which he devastated, presumably to ensure that he would not be under threat from that quarter while he dealt with the Ottomans. Then he moved south and east into Bayazid's territory, besieging the eastern Anatolian city of Sivas in the summer of 1400. In late August the fortress fell in the most literal sense, Tamerlane having mined its walls until they collapsed.

Never one to miss an opportunity to impress his enemies, the old warrior had 4,000 of Sivas' defenders bound agonizingly with their heads between their thighs and cast into the drained moat. To prolong their suffering, planks were laid over them before the moat was filled in.

The challenge could not be ignored, and Sultan Bayazid now turned his back on Constantinople, to which he had been laying siege, and marched east to face a mightier foe. To deal with Tamerlane he called up additional forces from Rumelia—that part of the Balkans then under Ottoman rule—as well as Tatar and Turcoman auxiliaries.

But instead of marching west to challenge Bayazid more directly, Tamerlane turned south to deal with the potential threat of the Egyptian Mamelukes in Syria. In the winter of 1400-01, first Aleppo and then Damascus was taken with great slaughter before the conqueror withdrew, leaving the whole area in chaos.

Next, Tamerlane marched due east to Baghdad, which had rebelled against his authority. Taking it at the height of summer was no easy task, but Tamerlane's spies told him that in the blazing heat of midday, most of the sentries on the city walls would be nothing more than helmets propped on spears. So that was when he attacked. The scenes that followed were impressive even by Tamerlane's standards. In 1437, Egyptian historian Al Maqrizi wrote that Baghdad, once one of the world's great centers of civilization, could barely be called a city at all.



The conqueror then returned to Georgia, perhaps feeling that his detour to Baghdad might have given the Georgians time to recover from his previous depredations. After once again laying waste to the region, he finally felt ready to take on the Ottoman sultan. Negotiations had in fact been going on between Tamerlane and Bayazid for some time, but they had degenerated into little more than an exchange of insults. All that was left was to fight.

The invading army returned to Sivas, where Tamerlane received the last delegation from Bayazid. Again, nothing was resolved, but Tamerlane took the opportunity to impress his visitors with a review of his forces that began at daybreak and continued until noon.

The finest sight was presented by the reserves that Tamerlane had called up from Samarkand, who were under the command of his grandson Mohammed Sultan. The rest of the army had been in the field constantly for nearly three years, and their condition would have showed it. But the reserves were magnificently ar-

The Battle of Ankara, though little remembered today, was among history's most intriguing engagements, replete with bold stratagems, wily engineering feats, flame-throwing elephant riders, and acts of valor and betrayal.

TIMUR RISES FROM THE GRAVE

TIMUR-I-LENK, THE MAN KNOWN to history as Tamerlane, fell ill on his way to campaign in China and died at Otrar on February 17 or 18, 1405. His embalmed body was returned to Samarkand in an ebony coffin and placed in the mausoleum of Gur-e-amir.

For more than 500 years he remained undisturbed in a sarcophagus covered by a vast slab of blue-green nephrite, a kind of jade. And then, in June 1941,



Using Timur-i-Lenk's skull as a basis, scientist M.M. Gerasimov reconstructed his likeness.

the Soviet Archaeological Commission opened the tomb and examined the skeleton.

The remains also included hairs—most notably a few bristles of a chestnut moustache—and fragments of skin and muscle tissue. Measurements of the skeleton revealed that, at some 170 centimeters, Tamerlane was tall for a Tatar, and of powerful physique.

It was confirmed that "Timur the Lame" had indeed suffered injuries, almost certainly caused by arrows, to both his right limbs. If the story that has come down to us is accurate, these were inflicted during a sheep-stealing raid when he was still a young man. And the wounds did indeed render him lame, for his right leg was shorter than his left, and his whole frame twisted. Small wonder he spent so much of his time in the saddle or on a litter.

Perhaps most fascinating of all, his right hand was found to be damaged in a way consistent with a legend never previously given much credence. The story goes that, long before the world learned to tremble at his name, Tamerlane had been engaged in a single combat when, to the astonishment of onlookers, he suddenly grasped the blade of his opponent's upraised saber. It transpired that Tamerlane had, at the very last moment, recognized his antagonist as his own father. The injuries to the right hand might indeed have been inflicted in such a manner, and without actually proving the reliability of the story, they do make it impossible to dismiss it as a romantic fantasy.

Scientist M.M. Gerasimov used Tamerlane's skull to make one of his famous facial reconstructions. Gerasimov had invented a technique whereby the bone structure of the skull could be used to determine the musculature of the face and thus the precise configuration of the features. The result is that, 500 years after his death, the world can once more look at the face of "the scourge of God." S.C.

rayed, each detachment having ensigns and equipment in its own color. Crimson banners, for example, were echoed by crimson saddlecloths, shields and quivers. The review ended with a great roll of drums and yell of war cries. No doubt Bayazid's envoys were duly impressed.

With nothing to be gained by further negotiation, Bayazid concentrated his forces at Ankara, the crossroads of Anatolia and the city that commanded the approaches to Constantinople and the Ottoman capital of Brusa. This was a vital square on the chessboard, and Tamerlane could not ignore it. But Bayazid had to decide whether to wait there or move east to meet his foe. In making the latter choice, he was probably influenced by the season; it was harvest time, which meant that Tamerlane was in a position to help himself to the present crop and even disrupt the planting of the next. The sooner he was confronted the better. The Ottoman army moved east.

Acting on information that Tamerlane intended to march northwest to Tokat, Bayazid encamped about 60 miles from Sivas, where he was well placed to deal with such a move. There he waited. And waited.

A march to Tokat may well have been Tamerlane's original plan, but he had found that it would involve crossing mountainous and forested territory much better suited to the Ottoman infantry than to his own cavalry. It is also likely that he learned that such a move was exactly what Bayazid expected of him. In any event, he moved southwest instead, marching for six days to reach Kayseri to the south of the Kizil Irmak. This river, the longest in Anatolia, rises near Sivas, then describes a great loop in which it flows first southwest, then north and finally northeast before debouching into the Black Sea. The Ottoman army was to waste many days waiting inside this loop for an enemy who had moved outside it. In fact, it was more

than a week before a brush between Tamerlane's scouts and his own extreme right finally convinced Bayazid that his adversary was now well to the south.

Having rested four days at Kayseri, Tamerlane now marched farther west, deeper into Bayazid's territory. He pressed on to Kirshehr, back on the north side of the Kizil Irmak and only 100 miles from Ankara. There the appearance of an Ottoman skirmishing party led to a bloody encounter, and at last revealed to Bayazid the precise location of the main body of the enemy. Tamerlane now faced a decision similar to the one that had confronted Bayazid at Ankara: Should he await his foe where he was, or should he continue his progress west?

At a council of war he told his commanders that a further lengthy march would hurt them far less than it would an enemy with so much infantry. Accordingly, he pressed on three more days to Ankara, where he chose to camp on the very site that the opposing army had so recently abandoned. Donning armor—now a rare event for the 66-year-old conqueror—Tamerlane himself rode around the city to inspect its defenses. And then he laid siege to it.

Bayazid, determined that the city should not fall, moved rapidly west by forced marches, and was on Tamerlane before he could take Ankara. And here, some have thought, the sultan missed a real opportunity.

The speed of Bayazid's advance had caught the enemy off balance, and some of his commanders advised him to attack immediately, before Tamerlane could marshal his forces. It was a strong argument, but Bayazid rejected it. Pointing out that his own soldiers were now exhausted while those of Tamerlane were fresh, he elected to give battle the following day. However, that not only deprived the Turks of the advantage of surprise, but it also left them with the problem posed by Tamerlane's diversion of the only water supply available to them. Large armies needed abundant water for foot soldiers, cavalry and horses in heavy combat in summer, and the Battle of Ankara would last an entire day in the crushing heat of July.

Recent archaeological digs have revealed how Tamerlane cut off the water supply while awaiting the arrival of Bayazid's army. According to research by Turgut Dincer, former professor of hydrology and statistics at Middle East Technical University in Ankara, the water diversion was conducted in two stages. First, Tamerlane built a diversion dam upstream on Cubuk Creek, with a breach in it to let the creek continue flowing downstream until such time as he chose to close the breach. Then a reservoir with a large storage capacity was constructed on a western tributary downstream. A canal was dug from the diversion dam to the reservoir to funnel off the stream's remaining water during a second phase in which the dam would be sealed off. When Bayazid arrived, he saw the Cubuk Creek flowing, but downstream it was dry, and there was no other source of water available to the Ottoman army. All the water had flowed into the reservoir and was sealed off. Such engineering works were made possible by the thousands of men available, and by Tamerlane's trained elephants.

Tamerlane's fortified positions have been described as piled rocks, ditches and palisades. Actually, they consisted of the canal and two low earth dams, the one on the Cubuk Creek and another on the tributary water course.

When the day of battle dawned, Tamerlane drew up his forces in eight detachments, with himself in the center detachment. One of his sons, Shah Rukh, commanded the left wing, while another, Miran Shah, led the right. The splendidly caparisoned reserve under Mohammed Sultan was placed at the rear between the main body of the army and the still-defiant city of Ankara.

To the fore, magnificent and terrible in their armor of painted leather, were the elephants, trophies of



RICHARD HOOK, MONGOL WARLORDS, FIREBIRD BOOKS

Tamerlane's recent victories in India. These seem to have been intended largely for morale effect, but with flame-throwers in the hands of the men in the castles aboard them, and with curved blades attached to their shortened tusks, their impact would have been considerable. The great beasts were trained to advance with a plunging motion that must have rendered them a fearsome sight to those unlucky enough to be in their path.

As for the Ottoman force, Bayazid chose a position on a spur of low hills running from the flank of Mount Mire. He himself commanded the center, with the army of Rumelia supported by Tatars to his left, and that of Anatolia backed up by Serbs to his right. (Had the battle been fought in Europe, those positions would have been reversed, the place of honor on the right always going to the home team, as it were.) Bayazid's

During his final belated attempt at a breakout, Bayazid's horse stumbled and the sultan was taken prisoner, as shown in Richard Hook's painting The Capture of Bayazid.

son and heir, Suleiman Chelebi, commanded the Rumelis while the Anatolians were led by the man now married to the sultan's sister, Stefan Lazarević, Prince of Serbia, an Ottoman vassal state since Kosovo. At the rear of the army, the reserve was under the command of another of Bayazid's sons, Mehmed Chelebi.

Estimates of the forces involved vary wildly. In all likelihood there were between 200,000 and 400,000 troops in the field altogether, the numerical advantage being with Tamerlane.

At about 10 a.m., Tamerlane went through his normal prebattle ritual of dismounting to pray for victory. Most sources suggest that he struck first, but this is little more than supposition. What we do know is that, amid a roar of drums and a blaze of trumpets, the first clash was between the Ottoman left and Tamerlane's right. Fighting was fierce, but the Rumelis were hard pressed to hold their ground. Weariness and thirst were enemies as great as the opposing army.

Tamerlane now launched his left wing against the Serbs, who made up the second line of the Ottoman right. The Serb cavalry were said to be so heavily armored that only their eyes could be seen. Their fierce resistance led to some of the bitterest fighting of the day, with the Serbs apparently gaining the upper hand. It has been suggested that when Tamerlane's men retreated, they did so by prearrangement, but it seems more likely that they were genuinely driven back. In any event, they recoiled and the Serbs advanced.

Things were looking much better for the Ottomans, but it was not to last. Whether the Serbs actually lost cohesion in the pursuit, or whether Bayazid, as some have suggested, simply ordered them back in the fear that they might, the advance was not sustained. Indeed, so determined was the counterattack by Tamerlane's left that his horsemen in turn overreached themselves. Seeing the danger, Mohammed Sultan gained his grandfather's permission to relieve the pressure on them by launching his reserve against Bayazid's center.

As if that was not bad enough, a disastrous development now occurred on the Ottoman left. The Tatar auxiliaries, who occupied a place on the left flank roughly corresponding to that of the Serbs on the right, suddenly changed sides, joining Tamerlane and attacking the rear of the already wavering Rumelians.

There seems to be little doubt that the treachery had been fomented by the wily Tamerlane. The two forces were highly mixed, and the campaign even had some of the characteristics of a civil war; both armies had in their ranks dispossessed princes who had taken some but not all of their men over to the other side with them. Tamerlane, himself perhaps best described as Tatar, had probably been in touch with Bayazid's Tatars and had persuaded them that he was their true leader.

But precisely how it had happened was of no immediate concern to the Ottomans. Here was a real crisis, and a swift response came from Bayazid's ablest son, Mehmed Chelebi, commanding the reserve. That attacking its own side from behind is not part of the duty of any army's reserve goes without saying, but Bayazid's Tatars were now on Tamerlane's side. Accordingly, Mehmed's troops charged, but it was not enough, and the army of Rumelia continued to give ground.

Whatever hope still remained for Bayazid vanished when betrayal eroded the integrity of his right wing as

well. Substantial Turcoman cavalry contingents from recently conquered territories suddenly broke away from the army of Anatolia and attacked the Ottoman center. Whether there had been collusion with Tamerlane in this case is again uncertain. Seeing that the Ottoman cause was lost and recognizing some of their own princes in Tamerlane's ranks, they may have simply elected to join the winning side.

But so crucial was the part played by treachery at Ankara that something more must be said about it. Tamerlane and Bayazid were very different characters. Tamerlane was a soldier to his fingertips, and campaigning was his life. The morale of his troops was of primary importance to him, and he saw to it that they were well looked after. If a boost was needed, he would call in astrologers, who would be guaranteed to predict triumph. And were they not always right?

Bayazid, by contrast, great commander though he was, had interests ranging far beyond military affairs, and it is clear that he did not concern himself greatly with the morale of his auxiliaries. At Ankara the Turcomans and Tatars may have been not only weary and thirsty but also discontented over the way they were treated as Ottoman subjects and soldiers. Had they been happy with Bayazid's rule, their loyalty might not have been shaken. Whatever their reasons, in defecting they sealed the fate of the Ottoman army.

Tamerlane was now in a position to order a general advance. With defeat now certain, Bayazid's heir, Suleiman Chelebi, fled the carnage. Stefan Lazarević cut his way through to the sultan from his embattled position on the Ottoman right and urged him to flee while there was still time. Scorning his advice, Bayazid instead retreated to the hill of Catal Tepe behind the Ottoman lines, and there with his personal guard and some Serbs from the right wing prepared to make a stand that would at least cover his son's retreat.

The rest of the battlefield was left to the dead and dying, as the final act of the drama was played out on the slopes of Catal Tepe. Rejecting as dishonorable the suggestion that he should attempt to escape in disguise, the sultan fought shoulder to shoulder with his men, ax in hand. Time and again Tamerlane's men charged; time and again the Turks threw them back. The gallant but hopeless defense went on for some hours until darkness began to fall, and Bayazid's thoughts at last turned to flight. With 300 or so cavalry, he tried to break out to the east. Tamerlane's men, fearing that the greatest prize of all might yet elude them, pursued hotly, and the sultan was captured when his horse stumbled and threw him. With his capture, the Ottoman disaster was complete.

Hands bound, Bayazid was taken before Tamerlane, who by then was calmly playing chess with his son, Shah Rukh. A lesser prisoner could have expected no mercy, but the old conqueror seems to have treated his defeated adversary with courtesy. Marlowe's story that Bayazid was confined in an iron cage is apocryphal, possibly stemming from a poetic description by Ahmad Arabshah of the Sultan having "fallen into the hunter's snare and been confined like a bird in a cage."

With the Ottoman army routed and the sultan a prisoner, no further action was necessary, but Tamerlane did push on west, to besiege and capture the Crusader stronghold of Smyrna (now Izmir) before returning at



survive him. Its disintegration was perhaps inevitable, for it was less an empire than the scene of a vast catastrophe, the survivors of which were left powerless over their own destinies. Utterly lacking in social, economic or political cohesion, it was held together only by the extraordinary, remorseless energy of its creator.

The Ottoman Empire could scarcely have been more different. It was purposely created to be an empire, with Islam as its guiding principle. Administration might often be corrupt, but at least there was administration. The disaster of Ankara was followed by a decade of chaos, but then the recovery began. Barely 50 years after Bayazid's defeat, the Ottomans had taken Constantinople and posed a more serious threat than ever to the rest of Europe.

Must we conclude, then, that Tamerlane's was a hollow victory? To suggest such a thing is surely to mistake the nature of the man. He is frequently compared with Genghis Khan, whose empire he sought to rebuild. But that is to judge him by standards he would scarcely have recognized. It is impossible to imagine Tamerlane being content to rule over a peaceful empire. He found fulfillment only in bloody conquest, and victory in battle was an end in itself.

Always he looked for new lands to conquer, new cities to destroy, new enemies to vanquish. From posterity's perspective, he is perhaps best understood as a sort of career criminal, a gangster on the grand scale.

And Bayazid's defeat was no more illusory than Tamerlane's victory. His dynasty may have recovered, but he was finished. For their empires, the Battle of Ankara may, in the long run, scarcely have mattered, but the magnitude of the triumph for one commander and the disaster for the other can scarcely be exaggerated. As such, Ankara stands as the tactical masterpiece of Tamerlane's military career. □

Simon Craig is a London-based freelance writer whose articles on history appear in British and American publications. For further reading, he recommends: The Rise and Rule of Tamerlane, by Beatrice Forbes Manz; and The Empire of the Steppes: A History of Central Asia, by René Grousset.

last to Samarkand. It had all been most satisfactory—that is, except for the Georgians and the men now rotting in the backfilled moat of Sivas; the people of Aleppo, of Damascus and of Baghdad; the Crusaders of Smyrna and the mighty Ottoman army.

Bayazid still lived, but his existence as a prisoner in Samarkand was utter, unbearable misery to the once-proud victor of Kosovo and Nicopolis. Broken in spirit, he died in captivity the following year. As for Tamerlane, although now approaching 70, he was planning yet another great campaign, this time far to the east in China. He had, in fact, already set out when, within three years of his great victory at Ankara, he died at Otrar in what is now Kazakhstan. China was lucky. The conqueror's body was returned to Samarkand and laid in the magnificent mausoleum known as Gur-e-amir, one of the great treasures of Islamic architecture.

Although his son Shah Rukh did reassert control over some provinces, Tamerlane's empire did not long

Although described in Marlowe's 1590 play and in this 1680 Persian illustration, the legend that Tamerlane confined Bayazid inside an iron cage is known to be false.

Peter Padfield's Hess biography claims new proof regarding the Nazi's famous peace mission.

By Mike Oppenheim

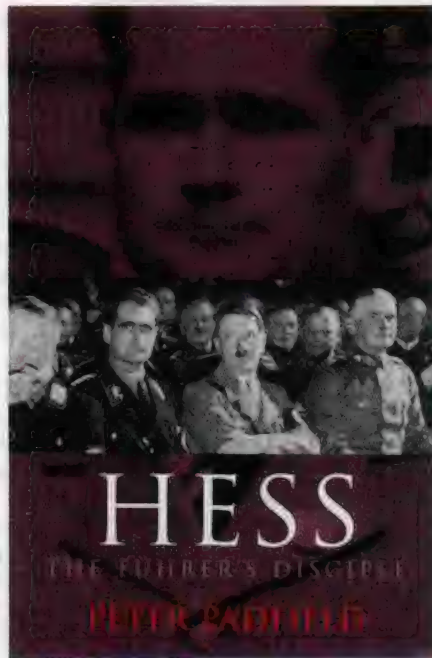
"Hess loved Hitler," begins page one of this biography. And the remaining 401 pages of Peter Padfield's *Hess: The Führer's Disciple* (Cassell, London, 2001, \$24.95) demonstrate the truth of that statement.

Like his idol, Rudolph Hess served through all four years of World War I and emerged deeply resentful at Germany's surrender. Settling in Munich, he joined the *Freikorps*, an irregular army of ex-servicemen who fought alongside regular troops against Communist uprisings during the chaos following the Armistice.

Unlike his idol, Hess had some education, and it was as a university student in 1920 that he first heard Hitler speak. He was enraptured and soon took an active role in the infant National Socialist Workers' Party. While they were imprisoned in comfortable conditions after the abortive 1923 coup, their friendship deepened, and Hitler began writing *Mein Kampf*. Hess typed the manuscript and may have written large parts. He remained Hitler's closest aide during the Nazi rise to power, after which he was appointed deputy to the *Führer*.

Hermann Göring, Heinrich Himmler, Joseph Goebbels, Joachim von Ribbentrop and other Nazi leaders were a remarkably unpleasant group: vain, thuggish, corrupt, egomaniacal, often purely evil. That, of course, makes them wonderful material for biography. Unfortunately for veteran historian Peter Padfield, Hess was the exception. Self-effacing compared to his flamboyant colleagues, he did not enrich himself, build a personal empire or join the many backstabbing cliques. Despite this admirable behavior, he was an enthusiastic Nazi, a hater of liberals, Jews, Communists and anyone else his leader despised.

Hess flabbergasted the world in May 1941 by flying solo out of Germany and parachuting into Scotland on a peace mission. During the year building up to the invasion of Russia in June 1941, German leaders had yearned for peace with Britain to avoid a dreaded two-front war. Despite the History Channel version of a fiercely united Britain prepared to fight to the death, many prominent Englishmen believed that only peace would preserve the empire. These included members of Win-



ston Churchill's cabinet, but not Churchill himself. Consequently, Hess' mission began with comic-opera encounters with mystified minor Scottish officials and ended in 50 years of imprisonment.

Did Hitler know and approve of the mission despite his vehement denial? Everyone agrees he did, but no hard proof exists. Did the British secret service tempt Hess with false information on the British peace movement? Perhaps. Was the German who flew to England not Hess but a double? At least one reputable scholar believes so. Was Hess murdered in Spandau prison in 1987 (at age 93) to prevent him from talking? Like John F. Kennedy's assassination, Hess' flight generated a flood of questions. And like the questions remaining after Kennedy's death, they will probably remain unanswered and continue to support a minor industry of researchers, from good scholars to wacky conspiracy theorists.

With more than two-thirds of his book devoted to the mission and its aftermath, it's a credit to Padfield's skill that he brings some order to the avalanche of official documents, articles, testimonials and anecdotes that continue to appear. Even before publication, the 1991 edition required an

afterword; this edition packs the latest information into a foreword. The author concludes that much of the evidence, old and new, is contradictory, dubious and often fraudulent. Yet he claims to have proof of a British deception.

It's hard to write a dull book about Nazis, and Padfield hasn't done so. He is a lively, opinionated writer who brings to life an important figure from a fascinating era. There is no shortage of Hess biographies, but this is the one to read.

All for the Regiment: The Army of the Ohio, 1861-1862, by Gerald J. Prokopowicz, University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, 2001, \$34.95.

Civil War battles, unlike those of the Napoleonic era, rarely ended with decisive results. Author Gerald J. Prokopowicz examines this phenomenon by chronicling the evolution and operations of the Union Army of the Ohio from its creation early in the war through its final battle at Perryville in October 1862.

Many Civil War veterans recounted battles as a contest of wills between opposing generals or as one regiment or brigade versus another, attributing victory or defeat to the individual commander or unit. Advances in military technology, most notably the increased lethality of the rifled musket, which shifted the tactical advantage from the attacker to the defender, are also given as reasons for indecisive battles.

After analyzing methods of unit recruiting, training and organization, the author concludes that the Army of the Ohio was basically "a collection of independent and fiercely clannish companies and regiments," resembling "a strong but ponderous beast whose component units could absorb enormous punishment on the battlefield without breaking, but which lacked the agility to execute the maneuvers necessary to destroy its enemies."

All for the Regiment: The Army of the Ohio, 1861-1862 is a superb and insightful study. It is well worth reading and owning, especially by those interested in military leadership, cohesion and fighting power in the Civil War.

Harold E. Raugh, Jr.

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Suicide Squads: The Men and Machines of World War II Special Operations, by Richard O'Neill, *The Lyons Press, New York, 2001, \$17.95 paperback.*

In organizing this book, English military historian Richard O'Neill excludes extremely risky missions (Jimmy Doolittle's Tokyo raid) or simple disasters (Dieppe). "Suicidal" in his quirky definition includes dangerous operations in unreliable machines such as midget submarines, manned torpedoes and explosive motorboats as well as poorly trained men like the kamikazes. A great deal—probably too much—ingenuity and resources went into operations that turned out to be both genuinely suicidal and unsuccessful. Japanese midget subs flopped at Pearl Harbor, with all five lost and nine of 10 crewmen dead. Except for a rare minor success, later missions also failed. Surprisingly, the most effective special operations were by Italians, whose manned torpedoes caused substantial damage. A raid in Alexandria Harbor on December 17, 1941, sank two battleships, temporarily tipping the balance of power in the Mediterranean.

Unlike those launched by other countries, Japanese missions usually took the operator's death for granted, yet that did not improve their prospects of success. Japan's naval suicide missions caused anxiety but only spotty damage. Kamikazes were a more serious matter. O'Neill points out that these were not a sign of desperation but a deliberate strategy. Kamikaze advocates argued that mass suicide attacks would convince U.S. leaders that the Japanese would die before submitting. They were right, but the consequences were disastrous. Convinced the Japanese wanted to fight to the death, the United States proceeded with firebombing and ultimately atomic bombing.

Suicide Squads belongs to the nuts-and-bolts and action genre of military history. O'Neill describes numerous war machines in exquisite detail, including many that were never built. His battle narration is always exciting, but the book is written in irritating, all-too-common academic miltairese. For every action, the author carefully lists names and ranks of participants, plus the name and features of each machine. Metric units are followed by the English equivalent. Nautical speeds in knots are always followed in parentheses by both metric and English speeds. In between the miltairese, readers will find an entertaining review of an extreme but mostly ineffective military tactic.

Mike Oppenheim

A Testimony to Courage: The Regimental History of the Ulster Defence Regiment, by John Potter, Leo Cooper, Barnsley, S. Yorks., England, 2001, \$39.95.

The protests of the Roman Catholic minority against the activities of the Orange

Order and other Protestants erupted into violence in Londonderry in 1969, launching a new campaign of terror by the Provisional Irish Republican Army. The British reacted to that new outbreak of sectarian strife in Northern Ireland by deploying additional troops and extending military operations throughout the troubled province. In addition, the Ulster Defence Regiment (UDR) was established in 1970, a force of local part-time soldiers, eventually numbering 9,000, that relieved the regular army of many tasks. Those missions included guarding key installations and patrolling and manning checkpoints and roadblocks to prevent terrorist attacks.

The record of the UDR was somewhat mixed. While it participated in many successful operations, elements of the unit, individuals—especially Catholics—and their families were frequently subjected to intimidation and in some cases even assassination. Numerous other factors, including peace initiatives, caused the UDR to be merged with another regiment in 1992 to form the Royal Irish Regiment. During its 22-year existence, a total of 197 members of the UDR were killed. This well-researched, detailed and interesting book chronicles all aspects of the history of the Ulster Defence Regiment and of the Northern Ireland conflict during the same period. It is well recommended to students of the strife in Northern Ireland.

Harold E. Raugh, Jr.

Dear General MacArthur: Letters from the Japanese During the American Occupation, by Sodei Rinjiro, Rowman & Littlefield, Lanham, Md., 2001, \$29.95.

"We love you, General MacArthur" and "With Deepest Regret" was written in English on many handmade signs waved by Japanese bidding farewell after General of the Army Douglas MacArthur's relief from command in April 1951. It is difficult to understand how, in the wake of Japan's devastating defeat in World War II, the Japanese embraced the leader of their recently reviled enemy and transformed him into a veritable conquering hero and the "preeminent symbol of their deepest hopes and aspirations."

To try to explain this phenomena, Sodei Rinjiro, professor emeritus at Hosei University in Tokyo and biographer of MacArthur, has selected 120 unique letters from the more than 500,000 sent to MacArthur in Japan from 1945 to 1951. Ranging from postcards and formal scrolls to documents written in elegant calligraphy, these letters express their writers' feelings and thoughts more openly than expected. One writer, for example, wrote of dishonest Japanese politicians and the "green mold growing on Japanese politics," and stated his hope that

Continued on page 80

The Korean War 'brainwashing' myth led to U.S. countertechniques against Communist indoctrination.

By George L. Keckeisen

The Korean War was really two conflicts in one. One was the highly publicized battlefield struggle between the forces of the United Nations and those of North Korea and China, whose goal was the Communist unification of Korea. The other war was fought behind the barbed wire of the prisoner of war cages, with slogans and lectures on political theory. The prize was the hearts and minds of the U.N. POWs, for many of whom the hardest fight began after being taken captive.

The conduct of POWs in Korea has assumed a dark and even sinister image due to stories of collaboration, disloyalty and even the murder of fellow prisoners. That image was further soiled by the 21 Americans who refused repatriation on January 23, 1954. Even worse, those men denounced their country and chose to remain with an enemy whose invading forces had killed more than 33,500 U.S. servicemen and women.

What caused that behavior? Was it a flaw in the American character? Did the Communist Chinese have a psychological secret weapon, or was this just an isolated event?

From June 25, 1950, when the North Koreans crossed the 38th parallel, to November 25, 1950, when the Chinese launched their main offensive south of the Yalu River, the plight of anyone falling into North Korean hands was precarious at best. The North Koreans were neither equipped nor trained to accept prisoners. Therefore, those who were unfortunate enough to be captured were usually shot on the spot. United Nations forces came to expect that, and therefore expected the same treatment from the Communist Chinese as their intervention in Korea began in earnest.

It was between November 1950 and January 1951 that the bulk of American prisoners were captured, including 14 of the 21 who would later choose to remain with the Communists. That was a critical period for U.S. forces. The South Koreans were incapable of stopping the North Koreans, and



Treason or brainwashing? A group of U.S. Army prisoners of war who refused repatriation during the Korean War poses for a propaganda photograph in the Chinese capital of Beijing on August 2, 1954.

the only U.S. troops readily available were those garrisoned in Japan. They were not trained or equipped for combat of the intensity that they would soon experience, nor were they taught the geopolitical implications of the conflict. The soldiers of World War II did not need an explanation for the struggle against Germany or Japan. Why, the Army high command reasoned, should their successors require political education to fight the North Koreans?

The initial performance of U.S. Army troops in Korea was disastrous. These soldiers were different from those who stormed the beaches of Normandy six years before. The interwar period, 1945–1950, had not been kind to the Army. Without a conflict, the Army attracted many people who would not normally enlist. For those enlistees, the Army offered a better standard of living than the slums and tenements of the big cities or the small farms of rural America. The education level was well below that of the average soldier during World War II. Many recruits saw overseas duty as the chance of a lifetime. They volunteered and found themselves in soft garrison duty in Japan. Ill-trained and ill-equipped, those soldiers could be expected to sustain a high casualty and POW rate. Those expectations were met.

Their trauma and confusion upon capture were intensified when their Chinese captors greeted them with a cigarette, a

he had "seen the light" and had embraced the Communist doctrine and way of life. He then became one of the first 100,000 "volunteers" who were sent to fight in Korea. Wang, however, was made of sterner stuff. At the first opportunity, he crossed no man's land and surrendered to U.N. forces.

As an intelligence officer, Wang was familiar with the Communist Chinese methods of indoctrination. He provided the U.N. forces with a chilling description of those methods. The re-education of a village, once in Communist hands, would take eight or more months and could be divided into four phases. During the first phase, which lasted about four months, the PLA and Communist officials would behave like brothers to the people. Everything was handled in a simple manner, with no unpleasant actions taken. They would use simple slogans for doing things in a different way. The soldiers would sometimes even help the farmers in the field. During that time, the peasants would begin to feel that communism was truly a better way of life. At the same time, however, the Communists were studying the population, making a file on each individual and keeping a record of his likes and dislikes, friends and enemies, to be capitalized on later.

When the Communists felt they had enough information, phase two would begin. The first group to be organized was the

smile and a friendly "hello." It was at this point that the Chinese began their indoctrination process. But how had American soldiers been turned against each other? The key came with the capture of Wang Tsun-ming in 1951.

Wang had been a counter-intelligence officer with the Nationalist Chinese army during the Third Chinese Civil War of 1946–49. At the end of that conflict, he fell into the hands of Mao Tse-tung's Peoples Liberation Army (PLA). Like all who fell into Communist hands at that time, he was given a new education until he convinced his captors that

rabble and riffraff of the village. The Communists called them "progressives" and told them that they were to be the new ruling class. But to take their rightful place as rulers, they must purge the traditional wealthy class. A town meeting would be called, and the progressives would be strategically located. The rich people would be called upon to confess to their crimes against their fellow townspeople. Whatever the upper class said, the progressives would denounce and then beat them while accusing others.

Then it was time for phase three—the organization of the poor peasant farmer against the rich farmer, and the purge of the riffraff or progressives for their crimes, known by everyone before the Communists had arrived. In that way, they began a class struggle that would create an atmosphere of uncertainty and suspicion. The Communists organized women's groups to break family ties, for in China the family had been the basic unit that held the people together. Children were singled out for special praise if they informed on their parents. When the chaos was at its height, the last phase was put into effect: Executions were ordered. It did not matter who was disposed of. What mattered was the manner in which it was done. All the people of the village would take part, even the children. The individuals were either beaten or stoned to death, so that everybody had a hand in the execution. The only things the townspeople now had in common were shame and guilt, and they readily turned to the Communist officials for assurance. This method was much the same as the one used in the permanent POW camps on the Yalu River to turn Americans against each other. The main difference, however, was that in the POW camps, psychological pressures replaced physical ones.

Brainwashing began as soon as POWs entered the camps. To obtain each soldier's background information, the prisoners were asked to fill out detailed questionnaires, falsely carrying the heading of the International Red Cross. Those questionnaires asked such questions as father's occupation, family's annual income and personal educational background. Another source of intelligence was the autobiographies written by the POWs. Because that information was of no apparent military importance, most POWs wrote without being pressured, but such accounts were powerful tools. If they were not detailed enough, the Communists encouraged the prisoners to rewrite them until they were satisfied that they had the material to suit their needs.

Following the pattern used in China, the Communist indoctrination officers started by separating the officers from the enlisted men. Destroying military unity created a leadership vacuum that the Communists readily filled. They would be the ones to feed and clothe and keep the POWs alive. This strongly contributed to developing a psychological dependency of the POWs upon their Communist captors.

The confusion of the POWs was heightened when they discovered that most of the Chinese officers spoke English and knew a great deal about the United States. The interrogators had a good background in American history and geography, and understood the U.S. political and economic system. They had access to the latest newspapers and magazines, and even listened to American radio programs. They used American slang and knew regional customs and issues. Most important, they understood the value of racial and social differences as tools to disunite the POWs.

With the information gained from the initial interviews, the Chinese began the POWs' re-education. That included daily lectures and group participation in debates, on topics such as economics and political theory. Marxist literature was handed out and group confessions and criticism sessions were mandatory. POWs who displayed any sympathy for the Communist line were singled out for special treatment. The stick and carrot concept was liberally applied. Those who began to lean toward their captors' ideas were treated well and encouraged to make others see the benefits of accepting the Communist way of life.

Physical torture was rarely applied in the Chinese-run camps. Peer pressure and reasoning were the preferred tactics for use with the uneducated and bewildered. Once a prisoner cooperated, even in the smallest way, there was no turning back. The indoctrination continued, day in and day out. Even mail was used as a tool. Mail containing depressing information always seemed to get through; the lack of consistent mail delivery was blamed on the U.S. bombing effort.

Most of the POWs were completely vulnerable to this new campaign. The reasons for the degree of collaboration can be traced to a lack of education and military training, compounded by a tremendous sense of despair. Military discipline eroded, and there was no hope of escape from the camps on the Yalu River. Prisoners were at the mercy of the Communists for survival, providing the latter with the perfect circumstances for their indoctrination campaign.

How successful was this second war in Korea? Of the 7,190 American POWs, 2,730 died in captivity. Many of the remaining 4,460 spent three years as prisoners. Charges of misconduct by other POWs were deemed sufficient to require an investigation of 565 persons upon their release. Of those, 426 were Army personnel. Only 47 cases were found to be serious enough to require courts-martial. All other charges were dismissed. As a result of the 47 courts-martial, reasonable doubt was found in 35 cases and they were dismissed.

The other record of the Korean War POWs is not as well known. Resistance groups with names like "The Show" and "The Free Hearts of America" were established in many camps to resist the enemy's indoctrination efforts and limit the activities of the progressives who had accepted the Communist line. Those organizations seem to have been so effective that the Chinese had abandoned much of the compulsory indoctrination in many of the camps by 1952.

Fifty-five POWs were decorated for their performance in the camps. A typical citation reads: "...Though severely mistreated and subjected to inhuman tortures, he refused to participate in the Communist indoctrination program, resisted all attempts at coercion and organized fellow prisoners in efforts to disrupt Communist techniques...."

In contrast to the individual acts of resistance and acquiescence among the U.S. Army troops, other U.N. POWs displayed more consistent discipline, most dramatically in the case of the Turks. Not one Turk died in captivity, nor did a single Turkish POW accept Communist doctrine.

The U.S. armed forces have learned much from the bitter experiences of the Korean War POWs and their battles in the camps. It did not take long to discover and understand the methods employed by the Chinese. Threats, propaganda, group pressure and manipulation, disease, malnutrition, fatigue and isolation were the enemy's weapons. New training and educational techniques were introduced to counter those threats.

The Code of Conduct, established in 1955, set the standards of conduct for all U.S. service personnel taken prisoner during armed conflict. U.S. pilots, imprisoned for years in North Vietnam, have testified that their survival was directly related to their belief in the Code of Conduct. Never again would captured U.S. service personnel be at a comparable disadvantage if they were to be subjected to a program of ideological indoctrination. □

About To read how Europe's Iron Curtain helped divide Korea and plant the seeds of the Korean conflict, visit www.militaryhistory.about.com.

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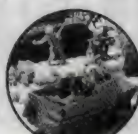
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In the period between the world wars came the first attempt to limit the use of biological agents in the form of the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases and Bacteriological Methods of Warfare. While prohibiting the use of bioweapons, the treaty did not seek to prevent their research, production or possession. There was no provision for inspection, and to compound matters, many countries that ratified the protocol stipulated the right to retaliation. An interesting footnote to history is that the United States did not ratify the Geneva Protocol until 1975.

Probably the least known biological warfare program, but the most remarkable in scope, was Japan's during World War II. The country's most extensive and most horrific biological weapons research and deployment occurred in Manchuria from 1932 until the end of World War II. That program, innocuously titled Unit 731, was located in Pingfan, Manchuria. Under the direction of Dr. Shiro Ishii from 1932 to 1942 and then Kitano Misaji from 1942 until 1945, Unit 731 employed a staff of more than 3,000 scientists and technicians. Unit 731 sprawled over 150 building and five satellite camps. Additional sub-units were located in Mukden, Changchun and Nanking. Experimentation on prisoners using bacterial dysentery, cholera and the bubonic plague was part of the Unit 731 program. At least 10,000 prisoners died, most from "experimental infection," and the survivors were executed after the experiments for autopsy. Under interrogation, scientists and technicians admitted to 12 "field trials" of weaponized biologicals. Eleven Chinese cities were attacked with biological agents. Those attacks ranged from water supply contamination to food contamination with cholera, anthrax, salmonella and the plague by spraying cultures of those agents from aircraft.

Unit 731 weaponized the plague in an interesting way. Plague-infected rats were fed upon by laboratory-bred fleas. The Japanese then collected the infected fleas, containerized them and released up to 15 million at a time over Chinese cities from low-flying aircraft. The Chinese National Health Administration attributes wartime plague epidemics there to these attacks, although conditions in China during the war precluded rigorous epidemiological and bacteriological data collection.

For the Japanese, biowarfare (BW) turned out to be a double-edged sword. Unit 731 was so secret and the Japanese troops in China were so undertrained and ill-equipped

to deal with bioweapons that many Japanese casualties also resulted from the bio-attacks. In 1941, an attack on Changteh ostensibly resulted in nearly 10,000 cholera cases and 1,700 deaths among the Japanese troops.

Both the United States' and the Soviet Union's biological warfare programs owe their germination to the work of Unit 731. The Soviets captured Unit 731. U.S. forces captured Shiro Ishii and Kitano Misaji, and granted them immunity from war crimes prosecution if they divulged their BW secrets. The United States had no research in either offensive or defensive BW early in World War II. Only when the intelligence agents of the Office for Strategic Services (OSS) discovered the activities of Unit 731 did the United States initiate its own offensive germ warfare program at Camp Detrick, Md., in late 1942.

The British secretly developed their own biological warfare program, focused on anthrax. To test the effectiveness of weaponized anthrax delivered by a conventional bomb, the British chose Gruinard Island, off the coast of Scotland. The island was bombed in experiments to determine the best dispersal method. Then in 1943 there was an outbreak of anthrax in sheep and cattle on the coast of Scotland that faced Gruinard Island. Attempts at decontamination by starting brushfires failed, as spores of anthrax had been embedded in the island's soil, thus making total decontamination impossible to this day. That incident underscored a major disadvantage of BW: The difficulty in decontamination may preclude the use of acquired territory.

The U.S. offensive BW program began under the direction of the War Reserve Service, a civilian agency. It had research and development facilities at Camp Detrick, production in Terre Haute, Ind., and testing in Mississippi and Utah. The Terre Haute production facility had inadequate engineering safety measures that precluded large-scale biological weapons production, but the Camp Detrick "pilot plant" produced 5,000 bombs of anthrax.

During the Korean War (1950-1953) a new production facility was constructed at Pine Bluff, Ark., incorporating adequate safety measures that protected the staff and the civilians and livestock in the vicinity. Additionally, a program to protect troops in the field with vaccines, anti-sera and therapeutic agents was initiated in 1953. Actual weaponization of microorganisms began in 1954.

The Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union intensified the propaganda and an arms race unlike any the world has seen. At the United Nations General Assembly, the Soviet Union's accusation that the United States used germ warfare in Korea changed the focus of the U.S. program and led to secret and contro-

DR. WINNIFRED B. CUTLER

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versal experiments. The American program elected to use so-called surrogate Biological Agents that were ostensibly nonpathogenic to humans. Those surrogates facilitated the employment of more deadly organisms. In a highly classified program, bacteria such as *Serratia marcescens* and *Bacillus subtilis* (the classic college microbiology lab bacterium) were sprayed in U.S. cities until the program was shut down in 1969.

In the San Francisco experiment with *Serratia marcescens*, 5,000 particles per minute were sprayed from the coast inward. One man died and 10 others were hospitalized from an infection that was never followed up. Declassified information indicates that during the test there was five to 10 times the normal infection rate in San Francisco areas that were sprayed.

More alarming were the tests to determine the vulnerability of the New York City subway system to biowarfare. In 1966, when *Bacillus subtilis* was released into the subways, it was learned that the release of an organism in just one station would infect the entire underground subway system due to winds and vacuum created by the passing subway trains. The declassified information was published in Leonard Cole's 1988 book, *Clouds of Secrecy*. One wonders if it was read by the Aum Shinrikyo cult when it planned its nerve gas (sarin) attack on the Tokyo subway in March 1995.

Meanwhile in Southeast Asia, the spread of war produced one clear use of biological warfare and several accusations. In Vietnam, the Communist Viet Cong guerrillas implanted bamboo and wooden spikes that were contaminated with human feces in what were called punji pits. The unwitting victim who stepped into the pit was impaled upon the spikes and inoculated with material that would produce a rapid and virulent infection.

President Richard M. Nixon signed National Security Decisions 35 and 44 in November 1969 and February 1970, curtailing the United States' offensive BW weapons program. That mandated ending offensive BW research and the destruction of the BW arsenal, and permitted only defensive research, such as diagnostic tests, vaccines and chemotherapies. As a direct result of the offensive BW program's termination, the U.S. Army Medical Research Institute for Infectious Disease (USAMRIID) was established at Camp Detrick, Md. None of USAMRIID's research is classified.

At the same time in 1969, Britain submitted a proposal to the United Nations Committee on Disarmament that included a prohibition on the development, production and stockpiling of biological weapons. By 1972, U.N. member nations had ratified the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxin Weapons and

Their Destruction, but there were some notable violations. The Soviet Union continued an offensive biological warfare program after signing the 1972 accord, under the title of Biopreparat. Through Biopreparat, the Ministry of Defense ran a minimum of six research laboratories with five weapons production facilities. At least 55,000 scientists and technicians worked for Biopreparat. Even with those resources, however, there was a terrible failure of Biopreparat's biosafety systems.

Western intelligence agencies long suspected that there was a biological warfare research facility among military facilities in Sverdlovsk (now Ekaterinburg), nearly 850 miles east of Moscow. On April 2, 1979, an outbreak of a disease that affected 94 people and killed at least 64 occurred in Sverdlovsk. The first victims died after four days, and the last died six weeks later. Livestock as far away as 30 miles from the facility died. The Soviet government reported that the deaths were caused by meat tainted with intestinal anthrax. Thirteen years later, President Boris Yeltsin admitted that the tragedy was the result of an unintentional release of anthrax.

Russia permitted a Western team of scientists, including Professor Matt Meselson, to visit Sverdlovsk in June 1992 and again in August 1993. Despite KGB confiscation of medical documents, the scientists were able to document that the victims were clustered in a straight line downwind of the facility. Although its cause was uncertain, the accidental anthrax release did conclusively demonstrate the effectiveness of the first route of infection—inhalation.

The Cold War produced the first documented modern assassination using a biological agent in an operation out of the pages of a James Bond spy novel. On September 7, 1978, Georgi Markov, a Bulgarian writer and journalist who worked for the British Broadcasting Corporation and for Radio Free Europe, left home for work. It was his habit to take the Waterloo Bridge bus to the BBC headquarters. As Markov neared the queue of people waiting for the bus, he suddenly felt a stinging pain in the back of his right thigh. He turned and saw a heavysset man in his 40s stooping over to pick up a dropped umbrella. The man hailed a taxi and disappeared.

Unconcerned, but in some discomfort, Markov told his colleagues at work what happened. He showed one BBC friend a red, pimple-like swelling on his thigh. That evening Markov developed a high fever and was taken to a London hospital and treated for a nonspecific type of blood poisoning. Three days later, he was dead.

On autopsy, a tiny pellet was found in the wound in Markov's thigh. The pellet had an empty, X-shaped cavity with two 0.34mm holes. Toxicology results deter-

mined that Markov had been murdered by ricin, a poison derived from a plant source. The ricin was encapsulated in a waxy base designed to melt at body temperature, thus releasing the toxin into the tissues. The KGB and the Bulgarian secret police, with technical assistance and training reportedly authorized by KGB chairman Yuri Andropov, had executed a flawless and as yet unsolved murder.

The untreatable toxin used in the Markov umbrella murder can be weaponized as an aerosol. With an average lethal dose of 1/5,000th of a gram, ricin remains a potent BW agent. Under the 1972 convention, it is defined as a "schedule one" controlled substance. The worldwide processing of more than 100 million metric tons of castor beans results in a five percent waste mash—this waste mash is ricin toxin.

The Soviet Union has also been accused of using mycotoxins as "yellow rain" in support of Communist armies in Cambodia and Laos, as well as in Afghanistan, though no conclusive evidence has surfaced. Meteorological conditions, background fungal infections and even bee pollen were confounding the findings of investigators. Then, in September 1984, a cult called the Rashneeshee successfully contaminated the salad bars of 10 restaurants in Wasco county, east of Portland, Ore. This second route of infection by a BW agent—the oral intake of contaminated food or water—resulted in 751 cases of salmonella poisoning.

This first known mass bioterrorist attack may not have been the last by a long shot. The Aum Shinrikyo cult that was responsible for the Tokyo subway gas attack had sent members to Africa to collect samples of the Ebola virus, had tried to weaponize botulinus and had experimented unsuccessfully with aerosolizing anthrax.

During the Iran-Iraq War (1980-1988) there were numerous allegations of use of chemical weapons by Iraq. The U.N. secretary general dispatched a team of specialists to verify them but was unable to.

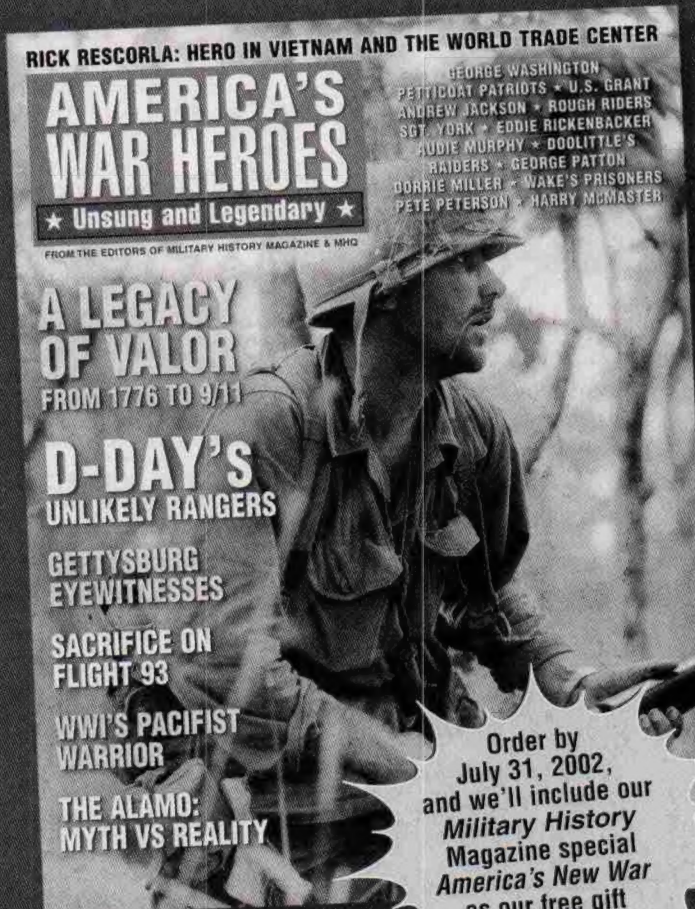
Biowarfare in its many forms is by no means new. From poisoning well water to poisoning salad bars in restaurants, from poisoned arrows of 300 BC to poisoned punji stakes in 1965, from catapulting plague victims to dissemination of toxins by aircraft, warfare has included biological agents. Will biological weapons be used in future conflicts? It is only a question of when. □

To learn more about biological weapons, read *Germs: Biological Weapons and America's Secret War*, by Judith Miller et al. www.TheHistoryNetShop.com
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REVIEWS

Continued from page 68

the Americans would enact reforms. Another Japanese letter writer requested that Japan be made an American colony. While most of the letters to MacArthur were supportive, if not adulatory, some contained emotional pleas and complaints about incidents such as American airplanes flying over the Imperial Palace, soldier misconduct and the pending war crimes trials. One letter, written in blood, begged MacArthur not to charge the Japanese emperor as a war criminal.

The interesting and revealing letters in this volume help show how the Japanese in the immediate post-World War II years of American occupation revered MacArthur, offering him "three banzais," as a strong figure of authority and the promise of reform. This book is interesting and enjoyable to read and offers genuine insight into the minds of the Japanese people during that era.

Harold E. Raugh, Jr

THE SOFTWARE BOOKSHELF

Shogun Total War: Warlord Edition (\$39.95, Requires a Pentium 233 MMX with Windows 95 or higher, 64MB RAM, 4X CD-ROM drive, www.totalwar.com) is a rare treat for fans of Japanese military history. This game has something for everyone, whether the player is looking for an intense real-time strategy game or interested in re-creating historical 16th-century warlord battles. Players can relive the epic conflicts as they command samurai archers, spearmen, mounted archers and cavalry.

Shogun does a fine job facilitating control of armies via a combination of keyboard and mouse to group troops, manage formations and order attacks or retreats. It does an equally fine job of depicting the classic warriors and their battlefields. *Shogun's* digital manual has a nice overview of Japanese history, and there are several battle exercises modeling historical events.

Beyond the set piece battles is a fine campaign engine that challenges players to be competent not only on the battlefield but also in the political arena by managing territories won, raising armies, appeasing the population with a good harvest and dealing with religious differences. A scenario editor and a multiplayer component round out this excellent product.

Bernard Dy

For additional reviews or to submit your own online review, go to TheHistoryNet at www.thehistorynet.com.

Noted as the site of George Washington's wedding, Virginia's 'White House' fell victim to the Civil War.

By C. Brian Kelly

Springtime in Virginia, and at a historic plantation on the Pamunkey River called the White House, an agitated woman, half crippled by arthritis, stuck a note on the front door telling the oncoming Yankees not to desecrate this old home.

Not asking, but telling.

More precisely, leaving the old family home to the advancing Union forces, Confederate General Robert E. Lee's wife Mary addressed her note to "Northern soldiers who profess to reverence Washington." Mincing no words, she went on to say: "forebear to desecrate the home of his first married life, the property of his wife, now owned by her descendants." And she signed it, "A Grand-daughter of Mrs. Washington."

Translated, what she was pointing out in a poignant moment of distress, in the spring of 1862, was the fact that George Washington had married the widowed Martha Dandridge Custis right here, at the riverside plantation Martha had inherited from her first husband. Furthermore, the plantation was now owned by a member of the Lee family...specifically, by Mary's son William Henry Fitzhugh "Rooney" Lee, left to him by her father, the late George Washington Parke Custis, grandson of Martha Washington.

Mrs. Lee and two of her four unmarried daughters had taken temporary refuge in the old home in the fall of 1861, joining Rooney's delicate wife Charlotte and a child while their respective menfolk served the Confederate cause as the soldiers they were. All that came after the Lees had to abandon their striking Arlington House plantation, which overlooked Washington, D.C., from a high hill on the southern flanks of the Potomac River—today still a high point of Arlington National Cemetery. Once the U.S. Army's Robert E. Lee had declared that his true allegiance was to his state of Virginia, the family's Arlington House estate inevitably had been marked for seizure as Federal troops moved into Virginia's northern tier of cities and counties.

Now, a year later, Mary Lee and family were being dislodged by the hounds of war once again. This time it was because of Maj. Gen. George McClellan's Peninsula campaign, which called for a large Union force to move up the Virginia Peninsula

lying between the York and James rivers, in an effort to capture the state (and Confederate) capital of Richmond.

The river he initially chose to supply his army was the York rather than the James, and the landing site for his supplies would be—such bittersweet irony—the Lee family's own White House property on the Pamunkey, at the head of the York.

Back in Richmond, meanwhile, Mary's husband Robert E. Lee was agitated by her predicament, naturally...but what could he do? He wasn't even a first-rank general. He hadn't yet caught fire as a Confederate leader of any great account. Some people were even calling him "Granny" or "Evacuating Lee" for his seemingly slow and timid performance in western Virginia in the fall of 1861.

McClellan, though, changed all that. That is to say, his troops did when they badly wounded Joseph Johnston, the Confederate general charged with defending Richmond from the onslaught by McClellan's 100,000 men. With the next-in-line too ill to take over, fortifications specialist Robert E. Lee was called from his desk work in Richmond to command the Confederate forces. Turning unexpectedly aggressive, Lee managed in the series of battles known as the Seven Days' campaign to drive McClellan's superior forces back down the peninsula, thus ending the threat to Richmond for some time. This was history's first view of the real Robert E. Lee, who, of course, was destined to become the leading icon of the entire Confederacy.

Before all those events took place, however, there was that unhappy day when General Lee's wife Mary and two daughters had to flee Rooney Lee's White House plantation, which indeed was seized by the Federals. White House Landing then became the huge Civil War depot that Virginia historian Clifford Dowdey once called a "small city of supply."

But now, what of Mrs. Robert E. Lee? Where had she gone next? "Moving not far away to a house called Criss Cross," wrote Mary P. Coulling in her book *The Lee Girls*, "she and the girls watched enemy troops come into the area on May 18 [1862]." At Criss Cross, then, the Federals came across Mrs. Lee.

Then another move—still behind enemy lines at this point—took the Lee women to the nearby home of Edmund Ruffin, the elderly Virginian agronomist and fire-eating secessionist who the year before had been allowed to fire Southern cannons at Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor. Here, the Lee women were placed under house arrest, author Coulling noted, but with McClellan's personal permission, Mrs. Lee and her two daughters next were allowed to pass through the lines on June 10 into the besieged city of Richmond.

Meanwhile, Richmond had been saved, but in a manner dictated by time and events, not the Confederate cause. And, sadly, the Custis-Lee White House had been lost, "burned to the ground, fired against McClellan's orders by Union troops," wrote Coulling.

Adding insult to injury, the same White House site a year or so later (1863) would be the staging base for a Union raiding party that came upriver, disembarked and traveled overland to Charlotte's family home, Hickory Hill, in Hanover County. There, in front of Charlotte and, as it happened, her visiting mother-in-law, the interlopers snatched up a badly wounded Rooney Lee, mattress and all, as a prisoner-hostage, returning to the river by way of his own White House property. Rooney Lee would recover from his wounds and be released, but his perennially frail wife Charlotte and the couple's only two children all had died by then of natural causes.

With the devastating war over in 1865, Rooney returned to the White House property in New Kent County to begin farming it again. In the 1870s, however, he and a second wife moved to a recently inherited Ravensworth estate in Northern Virginia, just 10 miles west of once-proud Arlington House, by now permanently lost to the Lee family and already a burial ground.

First a popular member of the Virginia State Senate, William Henry Fitzhugh "Rooney" Lee then was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from Virginia's Eighth Congressional District. Not long after, however, he became ill. At only 54 years of age, he died at Ravensworth in October 1891. □